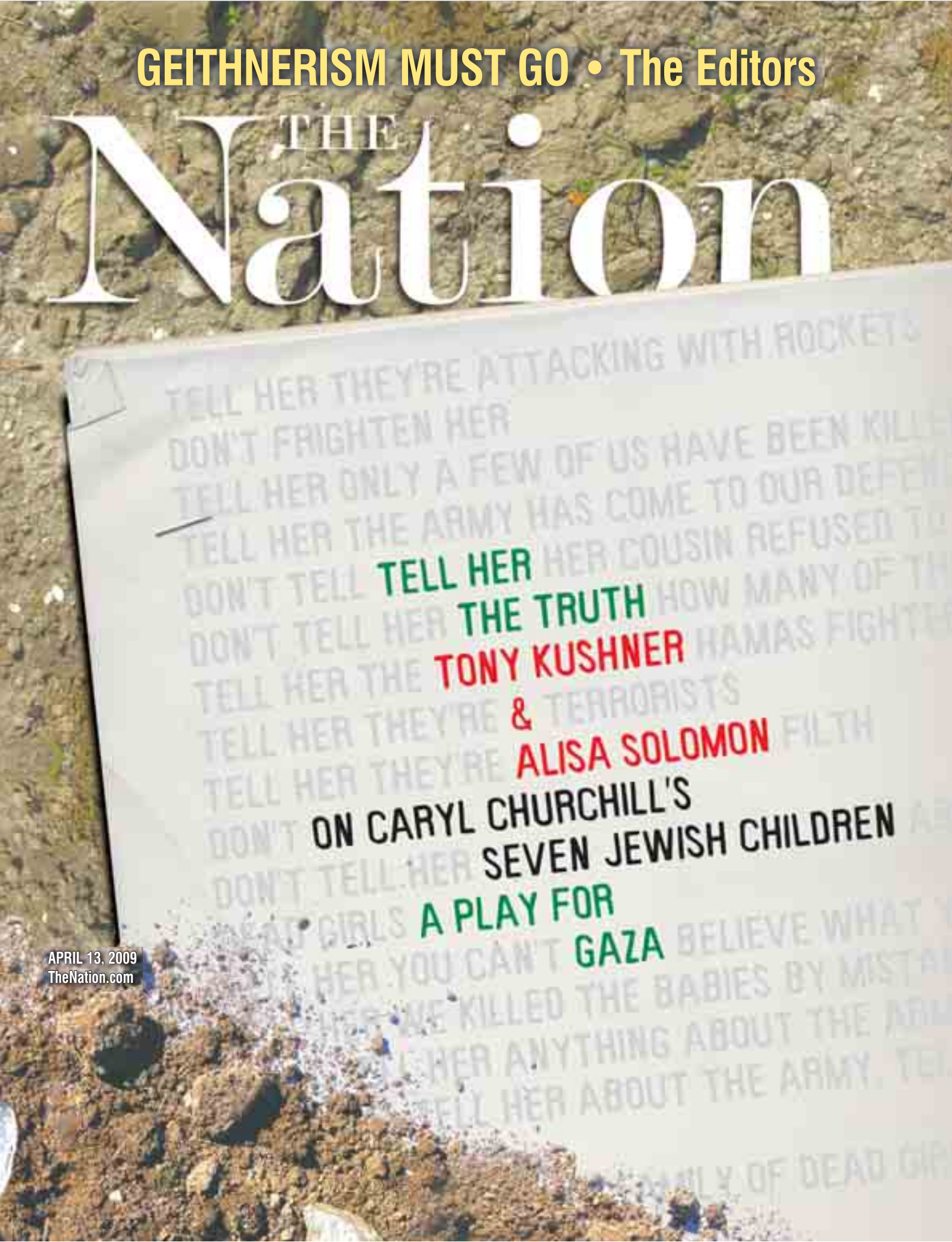
GEITHNERISM MUST GO • The Editors

THE Nation



TELL HER THE TRUTH

TONY KUSHNER & ALISA SOLOMON

ON CARYL CHURCHILL'S SEVEN JEWISH CHILDREN

A PLAY FOR GAZA

APRIL 13, 2009
TheNation.com

Letters

Leave Afghanistan

Medford, Mass.

As a supporter of MoveOn, I was sorry to read in the March 16 "Noted" that MoveOn is not opposing the invasion of Afghanistan. If antiwar *Nation* readers want an effective voice that *is* organizing against all our immoral wars, they should explore the Friends Committee on National Legislation (fcnl.org), which has lobbied for peace and justice since 1943.

Russell Weiss-Irwin

It's Global, It's Green, It's Good

Albany, Calif.

Congrats to Mark Hertsgaard. His "A Global Green Deal" [March 16] kept me in suspense, but just as I was becoming convinced that he, too, was going to wimp out, there it was: "As a moral and practical matter, the rich will have to help pay for this shift; otherwise it will not happen."

Please note that this coming December in Copenhagen, we will see the most important climate meeting since the 1997 conference in Kyoto. And the "Who pays?" question is squarely at the center of the Copenhagen agenda. Here's the elevator version: the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the master treaty that structures the global climate negotiations, says that nations must act "in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions." We signed the UNFCCC, and we ratified these words, and given that they're among the most important in the history of international law, maybe we should take a squint at them and imagine what they might actually mean. Everyone else is!

Tom Athanasiou
Executive director, EcoEquity

Larkspur, Calif.

I was disappointed that Mark Hertsgaard could write so forcefully about the need for a green "revolution" yet be so naïve as to think "a global green deal" is the answer. Like Thomas Friedman, he seems to have the "challenge is opportunity" mindset that innovation and market opportunities can rescue the climate. It is not the climate that needs to be rescued but humankind. (The planet and its abundance of adaptive microbes will get along quite nicely without us, thank you.)

Talk of human civilization "surviving global climate change" is essentially meaningless. As Slavoj Zizek points out in *In Defense of Lost Causes*, "We are dealing with what, in Rumsfeldian epistemology, one would call the 'unknown unknowns': we not only do not know where the tipping point is, we do not even know exactly *what* we do not know." He describes how Jean-Pierre Dupuy would confront the coming ecological catastrophe: "We should first perceive it as our fate, as unavoidable, and then, projecting ourself into it, adopting its standpoint, we should retroactively insert into its past (the past of the future) counterfactual possibilities: we have to accept that, at the level of possibilities, our future is doomed, that the catastrophe will take place, it is our destiny—and then, against the background of this acceptance, we should mobilize ourselves to perform the act that will change destiny itself and thereby insert a new possibility into the past."

One "counterfactual possibility" is slowing, or stopping, global population growth. To do this, drastic change would be required. Hertsgaard has called this a "code-red emergency." Though painful and wrenching, the changes needed are so urgent, Zizek argues, they may have to come through "egalitarian terror." The alternative: if we don't act as though our future is doomed *now* and the irreversible "tipping point" is reached, a terror of a very different kind awaits.

James O'Callahan

Hertsgaard Replies

San Francisco

I'd like to hear more from Tom Athanasiou. He and I agree that "Who pays?" is the make-or-break question for the

(continued on page 24)

The Nation.
since 1865

Geithnerism Must Go

The Obama administration's plan to buy up to $2 trillion in toxic assets, unveiled in the midst of roiling populist outrage over AIG's executive bonuses, has put Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner at the dead center of a political bull's-eye. Calls for his resignation have come from opportunistic Republicans—who have no recipe for economic recovery except more tax cuts for the wealthy—but also from many progressives, rightly appalled at how the Treasury's bailout enriches Wall Street at the expense of taxpayers. For now Geithner may weather the storm, especially if the media continue to mistake the stock market euphoria over this latest giveaway for a sign of widespread public support. But in the end, his fate is less important than the fate of the economic principles he has championed. Sure, Geithner must go—and he should take Geithnerism with him.

EDITORIAL

So far Obama's economic advisers have been single-mindedly wedded to the goal of restoring the financial system to the way it was before the crash and stubbornly averse to any proposal that approaches nationalization (or conservatorship or receivership or whatever you label it). "We have a financial system that is run by private shareholders, managed by private institutions, and we'd like to do our best to preserve that system," Geithner recently said. Locked into this logic, Geithner has produced a plan that relies too heavily on the "expertise of the market," gives enormous subsidies to investors, socializes the banks' bad debt and contains huge risks for taxpayers. And even on these rotten terms, it is uncertain to succeed in its putative goal—getting credit flowing again.

Indeed, Geithner's plan strongly resembles Henry Paulson's aborted proposal that the Treasury buy $700 billion of toxic assets, except that it ropes in a wisp of private capital in exchange for overly generous terms and promises that it won't limit the executive pay of investors. Under Geithner's plan, private investors and the government would buy, at auction, pools of mortgages that are souring the books of major banks. Hedge funds and private equity firms would put in 7.5 percent of the price, which the Treasury would match dollar-for-dollar using as much as $100 billion from TARP. The remaining 85 percent would be guaranteed in FDIC "nonrecourse" loans. If the asset values fall, the loans will not be repaid by investors, and the collateral (the real estate underlying the loans) is all the government can recoup. Private investors walk away with a minimal hit, and taxpayers end up holding the bag.

Besides the obvious raw deal here, Geithner's plan takes a gigantic leap of faith by relying on the efficiency of a market system that has so far been unable to set a price for these toxic assets. So his jury-rigged market creates an artificial price. But what are these toxic assets really worth now? Finding out would require taking a hard look at mortgages and the banks' books, raising the specter of large-scale insolvency. And even if banks are relieved of these toxic assets, what guarantees that they will actually begin lending? To date, Obama has merely asserted that they would do so, but the Treasury plan omits any lending requirement.

Instead of providing answers to these questions, Geithner's plan expects those who got us into this mess to get us out. By gambling huge amounts of taxpayer money and the president's political capital, it threatens to endanger the administration's budget, which, unlike Geithner's plan, represents a smart, long-term bet on this country's future.

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This week at TheNation.com

New & Analysis

Andrew Becker: Drug war invades US

Podcast: Meltdown: a panel discussion on the global economic crisis

Blogs: John Nichols: Cheney's "Executive Assassination Squad"

Nation Poll: What should be the title for Bush's memoir?

Experts of the World Unite

These funds… they're managed by professionals who know how to do this for a living. —*Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner explaining the new financial rescue package*

100 DAYS

According to the General Social Survey, Americans' trust in their institutions—from medicine to organized religion to, unsurprisingly, banks and financial institutions—is at an all-time low. In fact, the military is now the only institution that a majority of Americans have a "great deal" of confidence in.

It's hard to be heartened by these data (indeed, it's uncomfortably reminiscent of a failing democracy on the eve of a coup), but the distrust is entirely rational. In the past decade Americans have witnessed the broad failure of nearly every important institution in their lives: from church sex scandals to the influence-peddling of Big Pharma and profit-driven cruelty of the medical-industrial complex to an economic crisis that has revealed the Masters of the Universe who ran finance to be craven, corrupt and clueless.

President Obama's central campaign promise was to restore the basic sense of trust that has so thoroughly dissipated: a crusade of hope against cynicism. His inaugural call for a New Era of Responsibility seemed to signal a recognition that something was truly rotten at the core of our civic life. But if his election granted a momentary reprieve, the old cynicism threatens a comeback.

The outrage over the AIG bonuses occasioned a great deal of commentary about a resurgent populism, often in cluck-clucking tones of disapproval. But the rage, frustration and visceral sense of injustice associated with the bailouts are only part of the story. There's also the sense that an implicit social contract—by which we assign complicated technical matters to a class of talented experts and in return they figure things out—has been torn to bits.

Remarkably, the small class of (mostly) men running these failed financial institutions seem just as aggrieved. Instead of reacting to their failure with shame or apologies, many exude distrust of and contempt for the great unwashed who don't understand their brilliance.

As the *Wall Street Journal* recently reported, the AIG bonus backlash precipitated its own outrage on Wall Street. When the White House reached out to bankers to build support for its rescue plan, bankers took the calls as an opportunity to turn "the conversations into complaints about the anti-bonus crusade consuming Capitol Hill." Some, the paper reported, "have begun 'slow-walking' the information previously sought by Treasury for stress-testing financial institutions.… The banks' message: If you want our help to get credit flowing again to consumers and businesses, stop the rush to penalize our bonuses."

This is the fundamental dysfunction that Obama has inherited: the financial elites are ideologically bankrupt, intellectually discredited and morally debased. They have no reputational capital and inspire no confidence. And yet, just as

Noted.

HATFIELDS ❤ McCOYS: It's been a year of labor feuds, culminating in **SEIU**'s recent decision to trustee **United Healthcare Workers West**, a mighty, militant California local, and a move by **UNITE**, the garment workers union, to break off from **UNITE-HERE**. Then in mid-March, white flags shot up in one of the hottest of these wars between workers.

Just months ago, top officials at SEIU, the massive service employees union that represents hundreds of thousands of healthcare workers, tended to spit when they spoke about the **California Nurses Association** (CNA), calling it "elitists" (for organizing only nurses) and antiunion "reactionaries" (for trying to defeat SEIU organizing drives in hospitals where CNA wanted the nurses for itself). CNA director **Rose Ann DeMoro**, poised to head the largest national nurses' organization in history, bitterly denounced SEIU's "business unionism," which turned workers into "commodities" and gave away the farm to employers and politicians on patient-to-staff ratios and healthcare reform. Yet on March 19, the two unions, which had gone toe-to-toe in hospitals in Ohio and Nevada, announced a joint organizing accord. Now they'll go after nonunion hospitals together, with CNA organizing the nurses and SEIU the rest of the healthcare staff.

"The election of Barack Obama and the opportunity to transform our healthcare system, combined with the opportunity to give more healthcare workers a voice through passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), seems so profound, such a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, that it made the leadership of both organizations feel there were more significant things to do than continue our competition," SEIU president **Andy Stern** told *The Nation*.

Major organizing targets include the nation's network of Catholic hospitals, as well as the two biggest for-profit hospital chains, **Hospital Corporation of America** and **Tenet**, both of which are concentrated in the right-to-work South. The agreement with SEIU, DeMoro said, is "a game changer." If EFCA passes too, "it's almost unimaginable what's possible," she added. "I can see hundreds of thousands of nurses and other healthcare workers organized in a very short period of time."

As for their dispute over healthcare reform—the CNA is an uncompromising voice for single-payer, while SEIU has a record of supporting insurance company–friendly compromises—the two sides say they will campaign side by side for measures that encourage single-payer at the state level, while on Capitol Hill, as Obama's reform effort takes shape, they'll simply agree to disagree.

It's nice to see that this extraordinary, historic moment has finally pushed some unions to take the high road. ESTHER KAPLAN

THE EXECUTIONER'S LAST SONG: In an immediate sense, New Mexico's abolition of the death penalty on March 18 changes little. New Mexico has just two death row inmates, and Governor **Bill Richardson**—despite his belief that the death penalty is hopelessly flawed across the nation—says he will not commute their sentences. A majority of states still retain capital punishment on their books.

Yet despite this modest impact, could New Mexico signal a longer-term shift in the politics of execution? Unlike in New Jersey two years ago, New Mexico's capital punishment debate comes at a time of economic crisis. The cost of capital trials and death row is suddenly a nontrivial matter. More important, the very real threat middle-class Americans feel from the economic crisis has, for now, eclipsed ever-more-distant panics over crime, which since the mid-'60s have made capital punishment such an appealing issue for the right. It may finally be possible, for instance, to ask whether capital trials, appeals and executions really serve the needs of homicide survivors, family members whose lingering distress and psychological suffering is identified in a just-published study in the **Journal of Traumatic Stress** as "a significant public health burden."

What we are seeing is a quiet culture shift. That is why the issue found such momentum in the New Mexico Legislature this year; why serious abolition debates are under way in Kansas, Nebraska, Montana, Maryland and New Hampshire. In fact, with most executions now occurring in a tiny minority of states, the national death penalty consensus, which the Supreme Court perceived in restoring capital punishment in 1976, is over.

If nothing else, the new climate may make it possible for decent politicians who've lived their whole careers in terror of a death penalty misstep to step more boldly forward. That was certainly the case with Richardson, who in signing the repeal declared that more than 130 false death penalty convictions nationwide in the past ten years signal a broken system, and who acknowledged just how deep a rift the issue has opened with Mexico and other allies. In the Senate, **Russ Feingold** has introduced a federal death penalty repeal that—however unlikely to pass—offers another chance to test whether this fearsome issue has lost some of its sting. BRUCE SHAPIRO

PROPS, PRAISE, PRIZES: *The Nation* won recognition for its commentary, criticism and investigative reporting. The **American Society of Magazine Editors** honored *The Nation* with two **National Magazine Award** nominations. Columnist **Naomi Klein** earned her first nomination, for "Columns and Commentary," which recognizes "excellence in short-form political, social, economic or humorous commentary." Klein is the first *Nation* columnist nominated since **Katha Pollitt** won in 2003.

Contributing writer **William Deresiewicz** was nominated for the second straight year in "Reviews and Criticism," for his contributions to the magazine's "Books & the Arts" section. *The Nation*'s **Stuart Klawans** won in this category for his film reviews in 2007. This is the second year in a row *The Nation* has earned multiple nominations.

Journalist **Nick Turse** received the **James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism** for his November investigation, "A My Lai a Month," which exposed evidence of civilian slaughter in Vietnam. The investigation was supported by the **Investigative Fund of The Nation Institute**. The Aronson is presented annually to "journalism that measures business, governmental and social affairs against clear ideals of the common good." You can read the nominated (and winning) writers online at TheNation.com.

the deftly named "legacy assets" continue to pollute the balance sheets of the major financial institutions, so too do these legacy elites continue to lurk on one side of the balance sheet of democracy. In other words, even if they aren't worth listening to, they still wield power. They can still bring the whole thing down.

Which is why the White House has softened its tone toward Wall Street of late. The president warned in the opening remarks at a recent press conference that we "cannot afford to demonize every investor or entrepreneur who seeks to make a profit" (a straw man to be sure) while Larry Summers gave a private White House briefing to 100 finance executives in town for a $5,000-a-head conference on the future of finance. It's even tempting to construe the latest iteration of the financial rescue as little more than a massive bribe: paying off the banks who hold the power to torpedo the economy and the president's entire agenda.

But the money isn't enough. The financial elites want public deference as well. So the White House finds itself attempting to squeeze into a vanishingly small political space between a restive, cynical, frustrated populace and a class of unapologetic, entitled (they believe) and potentially destructive elites. "One of the things that I have to do is to communicate to Wall Street that, given the current crisis that we're in, they can't expect help from taxpayers but then enjoy all the benefits that they enjoyed before the crisis happened," Obama told *60 Minutes*. "You get a sense that, in some institutions that has not sunk in.... Now the flip side is that Main Street has to understand, unless we get these banks moving again, then we can't get this economy to recover. And we don't want to cut off our nose to spite our face."

Increasingly it sounds as if the president is playing referee in a dispute between the elites and the people. I'd venture most Americans would prefer a teammate. CHRISTOPHER HAYES

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

On the Marketing of Yankee Grass

A South Jersey grass farm that has supplied turf to Yankee Stadium since the 1960s plans to sell officially licensed grass in the form of sod or seeds.
—Associated Press

You too can have a yard with sod
Like sod upon which A-Rod trod.
One wonders: has it been suggested
That Yankee Sod and Seed be tested,
In case it's bluegrass that's made bluer
By substances that aren't manure?

Fair Elections Now!

The 2008 elections were the most expensive in history, costing a record $5.3 billion. Although the next election is twenty months away, the pressure to raise even more money for 2010 is already bearing down on incumbents. The economic crisis demands immediate and effective Congressional action, yet at this critical moment our politicians are being distracted by the need to fill their campaign war chests. Vulnerable House freshmen have been told by their party's campaign leaders to put $1 million in the bank before their first year is done. That's $20,000 each week without letup.

COMMENT

Fortunately, there's an alternative. Illinois Democrat Dick Durbin, Senate assistant majority leader, and Pennsylvania Republican Arlen Specter are introducing the Fair Elections Now Act, a measure that would turn the campaign fundraising system upside down. Set to move forward in the House are Democratic Caucus chair John Larson of Connecticut and North Carolina Republican Walter Jones, the lead sponsors of the Senate bill's companion measure. With powerful backers from the majority party leading the fight, a friend in the White House and an angry public demanding action, the moment is ripe for a major structural reform that changes whose voices are heard in Washington.

Senator Durbin, known for his pragmatic progressivism, has termed the campaign finance system "unsustainable." As fundraising demands have steadily increased, lawmakers have spent more time dialing up well-heeled donors, the vast majority of whom live nowhere near the lawmakers' districts, and less time gaining in-depth understanding of leading issues, crafting effective legislation with their colleagues or listening to their constituents.

Under Fair Elections, the rules are reversed. The measure would require Congressional candidates to seek support from constituents back home, not from those in Washington or in wealthy enclaves around the country. Participants would prove their viability by gathering large numbers of local supporters, not a large amount of money from the political class. House candidates who raise 1,500 small contributions from people in their state would qualify for a grant large enough to run a competitive campaign. Senate candidates would qualify by raising a specific number of contributions, determined by a formula that takes into account the number of Congressional districts in their state. The more populous the state, the higher the initial grant. If candidates want additional funds to address independent expenditures against them or to keep pace with a well-financed opponent, they can continue to raise donations of $100 or less, which are matched four times over with public money, up to a ceiling.

The proposal—modeled on elements of successful systems in Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, North Carolina and elsewhere—has profound implications for political organizing. For voters of average means, the benefits are compelling. Their small check, whether it's $10, $25 or $50, would be

essential to a candidate's success. No longer would they worry that their elected officials are indebted to deep-pocket funders with interests entirely separate from their own. Community leaders with strong grassroots support would become more important and would help redefine the pool of potential candidates. The bill would create tremendous incentives for lawmakers to maintain a dialogue with their constituents; it would encourage participation by new faces in the electoral process and give citizens the ability to hold lawmakers accountable, even in heavily gerrymandered districts.

Fair Elections would be attractive to incumbents as well, in two ways. First, the Capitol Hill fundraising grind would be replaced by increased contact with constituents. Second, the questions about conflicts of interest that inevitably follow big-money fundraising would disappear.

Supporters of Fair Elections will likely find a strong ally in the president. As a senator, Barack Obama was the first co-sponsor of the 2007 version of the Durbin-Specter bill. His extraordinary success in raising small donations during the 2008 campaign demonstrated the possibility of a fundraising system that puts regular people ahead of inside-the-Beltway special interests. Now, as he presses forward with an expansive agenda for change, he could well be a leading beneficiary of a policy that would undercut the money-eyed opposition to many of his proposals while re-energizing grassroots organizing.

The most critical matter before Congress and the White House is the economy, but other pressing issues demand attention as well: healthcare, energy, the global climate crisis, tax policy and government spending decisions. Without exception, these are concerns over which longstanding vested interests stand to gain or lose hundreds of billions of dollars. As the Obama administration and Congressional leaders grapple to find a delicate balance between quick fixes and savvy long-term policies—with a dose of smart politics—campaign donors have a heavy thumb on the scale. Over the past two decades the financial sector has invested more than $5 billion in lobbying and campaign contributions to both parties, paying out the largest amount ever in the 2008 cycle. Energy interests and the medical industries have not been far behind, spending $455 million and $784 million, respectively, advancing their bottom-line interests over the same period.

The fierce policy battles ahead in Congress will draw clear lines between the narrow concerns of big contributors opposed to change and policy solutions that serve the broad public interest. The Fair Elections bill, a bold initiative for ordinary citizens, offers a way out for lawmakers who for too long have been caught between the campaign money chase and the desire to serve their constituents. More important, it will increase voters' say over decisions that will have enormous consequences for their lives and for generations to come. In a democracy, we should demand no less.

NICK NYHART AND DAVID DONNELLY

Nick Nyhart is president and CEO of Public Campaign. David Donnelly is national campaigns director of Public Campaign Action Fund.

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A 'Stolen' Education

Police in the Rochester, New York, suburb of Greece recently arrested, jailed and delivered in chains to a local courthouse a 33-year-old brown-skinned woman named Yolanda Miranda, also known as Yolanda Hill. A judge read the charge of grand larceny and set Hill's bail at $25,000. Her alleged crime? Using her mother's suburban address and enrolling her children in the Greece public schools while living about nine miles away in Rochester.

COMMENT

She told reporters outside the courthouse she was just trying to "get the best for my kids." Her teenage daughter, Santazcha, who sat in the front row at her mother's arraignment, added, "My mom only did what was right because she loved us. She's not a criminal."

In keeping with our purported "postracial" era, local commentators ignored the matters of race, class and inequality at the center of this case, framing it instead in the language of law and order. Woman Arrested in School Scam Appears in Court, read a headline in the *Democrat and Chronicle*. The paper even provided Greece's citizens a phone number to report other cases of suspected "larceny."

Rochester's demographics are similar to every big-city school district's; only 12 percent of its students are white. Next door, in Greece, 83 percent of the students are white. In Rochester, 71 percent of students qualify for free lunch, the marker of poverty in public education. This makes Rochester the second-poorest school system in New York. By comparison, in Greece, 20 percent of the students are poor.

Greece educators had reportedly hired a private investigator and sent him after Hill and other urban parents who'd done the same thing. The taxpayer-supported sleuth will continue to trail mothers and fathers suspected of trying to cross the line and "steal" from the town, according to press reports.

Greece and Rochester spend similar amounts per pupil—some $12,000 vs. $14,000 in 2006. And both districts, like other communities, face budget problems. This is where similarities end. Rochester's schools have all the features of overwhelmed social institutions, beset by extreme poverty, racial isolation and attendant low performance. Students in Rochester consistently score below the state average on achievement measures. Meanwhile, in Greece, 81 percent of fourth graders recently met the proficiency standards on state tests in math and 74 percent met them in English language arts, above the state average.

The schools reflect the inequalities outside them. The median home value in Greece is $123,658. In Rochester, just up the road, the median home value plummets to $69,100. More than a decade ago, a private marketing group analyzed impediments to fair housing in Monroe County, where Rochester and Greece are located. Not surprisingly, it found housing choices for racial minorities "severely" restricted. The vast majority of the county's public and assisted housing—all but 100 of its 2,494 units—is in Rochester. The report concluded that "minorities experience mortgage denial rates which are from two to three times greater than those for White applicants. This disparity persists across all income levels."

The taxpayers in Greece are paying their detective merely to watch urban parents do what middle-class people have been doing for generations: moving their kids to higher-performing, less chaotic, less challenged schools. The key difference here is that people of color are restricted from making such moves. Through government incentives that encouraged suburban growth and fueled urban decline, we set the stage for Yolanda Hill's alleged larceny many decades before she was born.

Late last year the bipartisan Fair Housing commission, chaired by Democrat Henry Cisneros and Republican Jack Kemp, convened hearings across the nation. It concluded: "past and ongoing discriminatory practices in the nation's housing and lending markets continue to produce levels of residential segregation that result in significant disparities between minority and non-minority households, in access to good jobs, quality education, homeownership attainment and asset accumulation."

President Obama bravely made "tackling concentrated poverty" part of his campaign. He also made it OK to talk out loud about the incontrovertible fact that poverty, in extreme and concentrated levels, overwhelms parents and educators and misshapes a child's life trajectory. Disappointingly, the president devoted much of his recent speech on education to distracting, hot-button schemes—merit pay for teachers, charter schools. The worth of such policies aside, Obama lost an opportunity to focus a harsh light on inequality and a flattering one on small efforts that cross race and class chasms.

More than four decades ago, at the height of the civil rights movement, suburban educators and school board members in West Irondequoit and other affluent, white Rochester suburbs took the opposite course from their neighbor Greece. They initiated a small transfer program with Rochester by which students of color could voluntarily attend suburban schools. The small but popular program, not without its challenges, survives. Seven suburban school districts participate. Similar programs operate in St. Louis, Boston, Hartford and Minneapolis. State legislators in Nebraska crafted an innovative plan to bring suburban and urban school districts into a "learning community" that allows students to cross district lines and that promotes integration.

These programs cannot reach everyone and are not necessarily the best route for every child. And "desegregation" is simply off the table in most cities. Thankfully, though, we have entered the fact-based era, and we can act on the knowledge that concentrated poverty and racial isolation contribute to the achievement gap. In this new space, we can build on and replicate educational models that value connection over division and incorporation over separation. To begin, a collective attack on poverty's symptoms—health problems, incarcerated parents, grandparents raising children, exposure to neighborhood violence, the list goes on—offers a promising approach to education policy.

Meanwhile, that private detective at the suburban border, eyes alert for urban escapees, his handcuffs at the ready, is an image most unbecoming to us all. It belongs to a past we'd do best to leave behind.

SUSAN EATON

Susan Eaton, research director at the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School, is the author, most recently, of The Children in Room E4: American Education on Trial.

Eric Alterman

Is Jon Stewart Our Ed Murrow? Maybe…

The Jon Stewart/Jim Cramer confrontation on *The Daily Show* is being widely compared to that between Edward R. Murrow and Joe McCarthy over alleged Communist subversion in the Army. The analogy is considerably less crazy than it first appears. Sure, Murrow was Murrow, but there was a shlocky side to the Great Man. On *Person to Person* he would visit the homes of stars and suck up to them with a cloying mien that might impress Barbara Walters. And while the celebrity-stroking aspect of Murrow's career does not comport in our minds with the brave, tough-minded reporter who covered war, famine and the like, it probably helped build much of his audience and garner the trust of those who did not follow national affairs closely.

Ditto Mr. Stewart. Yes, he makes funny faces and starred in *Death to Smoochy*, but, along with Stephen Colbert, his ability to entertain is what lends him his authority in the first place. Think about it. Why should we care who this or that newspaper publisher endorses for president? Answer: we only care because we care about the editorial influence on the audience. Presidential candidates don't go seeking the endorsement of high school newspapers because, well, dude, *kids don't vote*. Stewart and Colbert have the audience that powerful people want to reach; yet at the same time, these two men do not participate in a pack mentality, and that's what makes them politically invaluable (and at this point, irreplaceable).

Their "we're just comedians" protestations notwithstanding, both men appear to take this part of their job no less seriously than they do the funny parts. It cannot be mere coincidence that they are responsible for three of the most important/cathartic media moments of the past decade. Stewart pretty much ended *Crossfire* all by himself and retired the foolish notion that a left/right food fight leads one any closer to truth. Next, Colbert shamed and exposed the pathetic performance of the White House press corps with his brilliant after-dinner speech at the correspondents' dinner. And now Stewart, first by eviscerating the coverage of CNBC and second by forcing Jim Cramer to own up to his on-air hucksterism, has revealed the lie at the center of most business coverage (and just about all cable news).

It's a sad—almost terrifying—comment on the state of the American media that we have come to rely on these two funnymen to tell us the truth about our country in the same way we relied on Murrow in the '50s and Walter Cronkite in the '60s. But as the mainstream media keep reminding us, albeit unintentionally, the MSM's groupthink is invulnerable to reality. Like the president who remained so popular with them for so long, it literally takes a hurricane and a biblical-style flood to get them to pay attention to events that do not conform to the agreed-upon national narrative.

To a certain degree, CNBC was low-hanging fruit. It's not merely the comically bad advice the network gives or the constant stream of partisan, pro-Republican attacks it levels at President Obama and the Democratic Congress. It's also CNBC's eagerness to embrace the sources it knows to be lying. So enthralled by the cachet of what Michael Lewis long ago defined as the "big swinging dicks" of Wall Street, and entirely dependent on its sources to provide the guest spots it needs to keep its ratings going, CNBC evolved into an unpaid PR service for the same CEOs whose financial shenanigans and deceptions brought us economic catastrophe.

I had a painful moment of recognition about a decade ago, when, during the dot-com boom, I stupidly listened to a CEO interviewed on CNN call his stock undervalued to reporter Ron Insana, found myself convinced and then proceeded to my computer to double down on a bad bet I had already made. When the stock tanked some more, I had a painful epiphany: these morons mouthing off about money were no better informed or intellectually rigorous than the loudmouths shouting at one another about politics. They were television talking heads, nothing more. That was the last time I thought myself smart enough to make my own investment decisions. As Walter Lippmann diagnosed the problem back in *Liberty and the News* (1920), I simply had no access to good information and was at the mercy of "the quack, the charlatan, the jingo, and the terrorist."

Stewart and Colbert have done yeoman work for the rest of us by exposing the thoughtlessness of the punditocracy's perpetual-motion machine, which spins itself silly powered only by hot air. But the problem goes far deeper. We may have elected a liberal Democratic president and Democratic Congress, but our discourse remains rooted in hardline conservative assumptions. That means the Obama administration—in Iraq, in Afghanistan and regarding so much of its domestic agenda—is constricted by homilies that make sense inside the conference rooms of Heritage and AEI but enjoy precious little relevance to life as it is actually lived by most Americans. Yet survey after survey demonstrates that the majority of people reject these ideological assumptions and embrace a far more pragmatic approach to problem solving, which goes by the name "liberalism."

The content of our business press is even more overdetermined by the power dynamic that places the interests—and assumptions—of the extremely wealthy over everyone else's. Think about it. Why did our Democratic presidential debates—particularly those moderated by George Stephanopoulos and Charlie Gibson—focus so relentlessly on the future tax rates of barely 5 percent of Americans? Why are headlines in *Politico* screaming about "class warfare"? Your (shrinking) newspaper does not have a labor section. It does not have an environment section. And it sure as hell does not have a human rights section. ■

PS: Don't tell my publisher, but Why We're Liberals: A Handbook for Restoring America's Most Important Ideals *is out in paperback.*

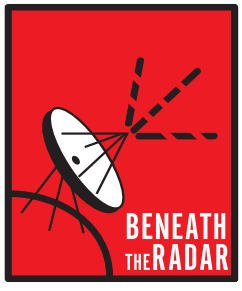
Gary Younge

Bonus Outrage: Class Struggle or Class Envy?

During *Bowling for Columbine* Michael Moore suggests to Dick Herland, a former producer of *Cops*, that he find new villains. Rather than screening mostly black and Hispanic men being chased by law enforcement, why not have a show called *Corporate Cops*, where police hunt down white-collar criminals?

"I'm telling you, everyone in America who's got just your basic, everyday job…is gonna love watching the boss being chased down the street with his shirt off, thrown to the ground and a knee to the neck. I'm telling you, that is gonna get ratings," says Moore.

"Yeah, I'm with you," says Herland. "And if I can find a police outfit that would prosecute corporate criminals appropriately and would go after them appropriately.… But…when police go after the guy who's just stolen $85 million [as opposed to one who's lifted a purse with $85], they treat him like he was a member of the city council—as he may or may not be—and it's not exciting television. If you could get that guy to take his shirt off…yeah, and throw his cellular phone at the police as they come through the door, try to jump out that window, then we'd have a show."



There have been moments over the past few weeks when it's seemed as though that day had nearly come. The celebrity website TMZ, which once brought you Britney Spears exposing herself, recently uncovered how Northern Trust bank, which received $1.6 billion in bailout funds, threw a lavish Hollywood party. Meanwhile, the entertainment channel Extra had crews outside the Madoff trial, and ABC, the Disney-owned channel, is stalking failed-bank executives to catch them alighting from their corporate jets. "The corporate jets never…disappoint," Rhonda Schwartz, chief of investigative projects for ABC News, told the *New York Times*. "It's like they never get the message."

Such is the mood of the moment. To what extent it is driven by the media instead of being a genuinely popular political force is not clear. Either way, the AIG bonus furor reveals the degree to which such episodes are a distraction from the urgent issues in this period, as opposed to a rallying point to broaden the audience that might discuss those issues.

In a country where the left rarely gets to choose the conditions on which it fights, the appeal of trying to capitalize on AIG's woes isn't difficult to fathom. The symbolism of the government essentially handing over huge sums to wealthy people who have screwed up is indeed a teachable moment. Rarely do things get as blatant as this. While perfectly competent minimum-wage workers are being laid off because of the economic crisis, the people responsible for creating the crisis are being paid millions to stay on. Executive pay can be a useful means of raising awareness of a broader corporate culture that treats workers with contempt. As a trade union organizer, I have used it myself.

The trouble is, before AIG we were already in a teachable moment; the hubbub over the bonuses just interrupted the lesson. We had been learning about the systemic flaws in capitalism, the need for it to be regulated immediately and the need to find an alternative in the future. With nations like Iceland and Ireland, previously hailed for their open economies, on the brink of default, our longstanding critique of neoliberal globalization was heading from the margins to the mainstream. We had been addressing the abuses of an entire system; within a week we're reduced to abusing people at their addresses in Connecticut.

The problem isn't just that the sums involved in the AIG bonus crisis are less than one-thousandth of the amount of bailout money being paid out. It is that by concentrating on them so completely the focus shifted from the institutional to the individual, power to people, and in the process, from class struggle to class envy. The former targets the system that makes some people rich by making others poor; the latter is rooted in the popular resentment of the rich for their wealth. Envy can lead to struggle. But while the two may, in the right circumstances, be symbiotic, they are by no means synonymous.

This is not a question of ideological purity but of strategic, savvy politics. If the left is going to be opportunistic, it at least has the responsibility to concentrate on the right opportunities. This was not one of them. First, the populist rage was, while not a media invention, certainly a media construct. Proclaimed before it was ever proved, it had the lack of depth of other call-in topics like gas prices and flag pins. Politicians performed "outrage"; news anchors shook their heads in disbelief, as though we had never heard of private companies ripping off the government and thereby exploiting taxpayers. A few days after the story broke, polls showed 59 percent of Americans were indeed "outraged" while 37 percent were "bothered." A few days later, even as the media furor swelled, the "anger" subsided to 50 percent. These were pretty much the numbers of Americans who were peeved by the bank bailout in the first place. People *were* angry. But AIG didn't make them angry.

Second, just like AIG's Edward Liddy working for a dollar or the Detroit CEOs forgoing their jets to drive themselves to Washington, these particular matters can be "solved" with little more than a gimmick coated in fudge. New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo got fifteen of the top twenty AIG employees to give back their bonuses and then pledged to work his way down the list, while the Senate indefinitely delayed acting on House legislation to inflict punitive taxes on the bonuses.

Meanwhile, as everyone claims victory, nothing really changes. Geithner rolls out another inadequate, invidious bailout plan that shovels far more money to the rich than AIG has done. "This is perhaps the first win/win/win policy to be put on the table," Bill Gross, founder of bond fund manager Pimco, told the *Financial Times*, "and it should be welcomed enthusiastically."

Roll cameras. Send up the chopper. Call 911. I feel another chase coming on. ■

Israel's recent bombing and ground invasion of the Gaza Strip, Operation Cast Lead, killed 1,417 Palestinians; thirteen Israelis were killed, five by friendly fire. Thousands of Palestinians were seriously wounded and left without adequate medical care, shelter or food. Among the Palestinian dead, more than 400 were children. In response to this devastation, Caryl Churchill wrote a play.

Churchill is one of the most important and influential playwrights living, the author of formally inventive, psychologically searing, politically and intellectually complex dramas, including *Cloud Nine*, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, *Serious Money*, *Mad Forest* and *Far Away*. To this body of work she's now added the very brief (six pages, ten minutes long in performance) and very controversial *Seven Jewish Children: A Play for Gaza*. The play ran for two weeks in February at London's Royal Court Theatre and is being presented across the United States in cities such as New York (Theaters Against War and New York Theatre Workshop), Chicago (Rooms Productions), Washington (Theater J and Forum Theatre), Cambridge, Massachusetts (Cambridge Palestine Forum) and Los Angeles (Rude Guerrilla).

While some British critics greatly admired the play, which was presented by a Jewish director with a largely Jewish cast, a number of prominent British Jews denounced it as anti-Semitic. Some even accused Churchill of blood libel, of perpetrating in *Seven Jewish Children* the centuries-old lie, used to incite homicidal anti-Jewish violence, that Jews ritually murder non-Jewish children. A spokesman for the Board of Deputies of British Jews told the *Jerusalem Post* that the "horrifically anti-Israel" text went "beyond the boundaries of reasonable political discourse."

We emphatically disagree. We think Churchill's play should be seen and discussed as widely as possible.

Though you'd never guess from the descriptions offered by its detractors, the play is dense, beautiful, elusive and intentionally indeterminate. This is not to say that the play isn't also direct and incendiary. It is. It's disturbing, it's provocative, but appropriately so, given the magnitude of the calamity it enfolds in its pages. Any play about the crisis in the Middle East that doesn't arouse anger and distress has missed the point.

The now-rote hysteria with which non-Israeli criticism of Israel is met—most recently dismayingly effective in quashing Chas Freeman as President Obama's nominee to chair the National Intelligence Council—has a considerable and ignoble record of stifling opinion and preventing unintimidated, meaningful discussion, in the cultural sphere as well as in the political. The power of art to open us to the subjectivities of others is especially threatening to those who insist on a single narrative. Hence efforts to shut down exhibitions of Palestinian art all over the country, most notoriously, per-

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haps, in 2006, when Brandeis University officials removed paintings by Palestinian teenagers from a campus library exhibit, "The Arts of Building Peace."

Theater, arguably the most humanizing of art forms because it begins and ends with human presence, with an encounter between spectators and living actors, has often attracted the ire of people grimly determined to maintain the invisibility of others. It's been twenty years since liberal stalwart Joe Papp caved to pressure and canceled appearances at the Public Theater of a visiting Palestinian troupe, El Hakawati. In the decades since, American discourse around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has only become more vituperative and polarized, as the New York Theatre Workshop learned three years ago when it announced, and then retreated from, plans to present *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*.

With its title, its subject matter, its distillation of that subject matter, of a long, tangled, bloody and bitter history down to a few simple strokes, it's hardly surprising that Churchill's play has elicited outrage. The hostile reaction to *Seven Jewish Children* has been amplified by the context of a frightening wave of anti-Semitism in Britain and elsewhere, and exacerbated by the tendency to misread a multivocal, dialectical drama as a single-voiced political tract.

Even among those who are anguished and appalled at the catastrophe in Gaza and repulsed by the invective being hurled at Churchill, some are likely to be startled, if not to say troubled, by the play's blunt assertion that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a Jewish-Palestinian conflict. Even those familiar enough with Churchill's work to recognize in *Seven Jewish Children* another installment in her recent move toward poetic compression—and Beckett proved how profound dramatic minimalism can be—may be taken aback by the play's brevity, by the playwright's implicit rejection of the idea that the situation in the Middle East is too complicated, too impacted, too needful of historical exegesis and balancing points of view to be responsibly explored at anything other than great length.

There are passages, particularly in an ugly monologue near the play's conclusion, that are terribly painful to experience, especially for Jews.

It's difficult to imagine that the author didn't intend to court outrage, whether or not she anticipated its ferocity. This imputes nothing to Churchill of the mischievous or sensationalistic. Her play's political ambitions are at least as important as its aesthetic ambitions. Moreover, it would be disingenuous and, in a sense, a betrayal of *Seven Jewish Children* to insist upon a calm, quiet reading or hearing free from the voluble passions it has enflamed. The fury that rises up around this conflict, and the cowed silence that is that fury's inevitable concomitant, are simultaneously the object and subject of the play. It's an incitement to speech and an examination of silence; in its content and through its inevitably controversial reception, it describes what can and cannot be said.

Why is the play so short? Probably because Churchill means to slap us out of our rehearsed arguments to look at the immediate human crisis. No wonder it smarts. The play dares reduce the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the kind of stinging simplicity of Neruda's lines, "and through the streets the blood of children flowed easily/like the blood of children."

Why does the title use "Jewish" rather than "Israeli"? Because all the children the play revolves around are Jewish, but not all are Israeli. And because not all Israelis are Jewish; a sizable minority is Arab. More important, because her play addresses the worldwide Jewish community. Our history of diaspora and persecution led to the founding of the State of Israel, which claims to act on behalf of all Jews. We have an impact upon its policies. Many Jews, including the two of us, feel profoundly connected to Israel and concerned for its fate; *Seven Jewish Children* is speaking to us.

Why does the play feel, even to those of us who admire its virtues, so peculiarly and, at times, almost brutally painful? It is an exigent text, a rapid public response to and at the moment of slaughter; and, remarkably, as few such texts are, it is contemplative, interior, almost entirely soft-spoken, and demanding.

The play consists of seven sequences, each composed of approximately twenty simple sentences, almost all of which begin with the words "Tell her" or "Don't tell her." There is no place-and-time setting specified for the sequences, and the lines are not assigned to specific characters. In fact, there isn't a character list or even a suggested number of performers, and the text looks less like a play than the poem it also is. Nonetheless, it's clear that these are discussions between the parents, adult relatives and guardians of a young girl, presumably a different little girl in each sequence, who the playwright specifies is not on stage, not seen. It's also clear that the first of the seven sequences begins during the Holocaust; then the play moves successively to the founding of the State of Israel, the displacement of its Palestinian population and the intensification of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, arriving, finally, in a very dark, very dangerous moment—probably, although this is not made explicit in the text, concurrent with the military operation and humanitarian disaster in Gaza that occasioned the play. All else—the cast's size, gender, age (as long as all the players are adults) and ethnicity, as well as all staging choices—the playwright leaves to the director and actors.

The central issue being discussed, in each of the sequences, is what the little girl should or shouldn't be told regarding her circumstances; the tenor of the debate changes as the circumstances change. In the first section, the child faces immediate danger of arrest and murder by the Nazis. Her survival requires that she have an awareness of the seriousness of her situation without being traumatized into paralysis or dissociation. The play begins:

> Tell her it's a game
> Tell her it's serious
> But don't frighten her

Tony Kushner, playwright, and Alisa Solomon, theater critic, are the editors of Wrestling With Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict *(Grove).*

Don't tell her they'll kill her
Tell her it's important to be quiet
Tell her she'll have cake if she's good

In the next sequence, which takes place sometime immediately post-Holocaust, telling or not telling revolves around questions of memory and mourning, of protecting a child from the emotional annihilation of a grief too weighty and of a knowledge of evil too imponderable for her youthful capacities.

Tell her this is a photograph of her grandmother, her uncles and me
Tell her her uncles died
Don't tell her they were killed
Tell her they were killed
Don't frighten her.
Tell her her grandmother was clever
Don't tell her what they did
Tell her she was brave
Tell her she taught me how to make cakes
Don't tell her what they did
Tell her something.

In subsequent sequences, what can and can't be talked about are the anxieties of relocating (to pre-state Israel, although it isn't named), then the presence and forcible displacement of others (the Palestinians, again not named), the roadblocks, the bulldozing of homes, water rights. There's a shift at this point in the dialogue: the tension between assertions and their negation becomes tighter, more suggestive of conflict within the family or community, as the speakers struggle over how to deal with conflict from without.

Don't tell her she can't play with the children
Don't tell her she can have them in the house
Tell her they have plenty of friends and family
Tell her for miles and miles all round they have lands of their own
Tell her again this is our promised land.
Don't tell her they said it was a land without people
Don't tell her I wouldn't have come if I'd known.
Tell her maybe we can share.
Don't tell her that.

Just before the play ends, the back-and-forth of the dialogue is stopped for the first time by a monologue. Though it's ostensibly an answer to the question of what the girl can or can't be told, that question becomes mere pretext for an explosion of rage, racism, militarism, tribalism and repellent indifference to the suffering of others. It's important to note that this monologue is neither the last word in the play nor any kind of summation or harmonizing of the play's disputatious voices. But it's near enough to the end; and expansive as it is, after so much compression, it unavoidably feels like a dreadful conclusion; to some, it's manifestly an indictment.

Tell her, tell her about the army, tell her to be proud of the army. Tell her about the family of dead girls, tell her their names why not, tell her the whole world knows why shouldn't she know? tell her there's dead babies, did she see babies? tell her she's got nothing to be ashamed of. Tell her they did it to themselves. Tell her they want their children killed to make people sorry for them, tell her I'm not sorry for them, tell her not to be sorry for them, tell her we're the ones to be sorry for, tell her they can't talk suffering to us. Tell her we're the iron fist now, tell her it's the fog of war, tell her we won't stop killing them till we're safe, tell her I laughed when I saw the dead policemen, tell her they're animals living in rubble now, tell her I wouldn't care if we wiped them out, the world would hate us is the only thing, tell her I don't care if the world hates us, tell her we're better haters, tell her we're chosen people, tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? tell her all I feel is happy it's not her.

This monologue is the "proof text" for those who've charged Churchill with anti-Semitism and worse, with blood libel, which her accusers discern in the last lines of the speech.

When the two of us first discussed *Seven Jewish Children* we turned immediately to those lines. We both winced when we read them; we both became alarmed. One of us was disturbed by the line "tell her we're better haters," resonant of Shylock and Alberich the Nibelung. The other focused on "tell her we're chosen people," contending that in this context it reflected a misunderstanding of the term "chosen people," casting Jewish chosen-ness as an expression of divine right and exceptionalism rather than of religious/ethical responsibility. We speculated that these two lines added fuel to the willful misreading as blood libel of the lines that follow: "tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? tell her all I feel is happy it's not her." Those who level the blood-libel accusation insist that Churchill has written "tell her I'm happy when I see their children covered in blood."

But that is not what Churchill wrote. Distortion, misrepresentation and name-calling are tactics familiar to anyone who's spoken out about the Middle East. There's no blood libel in the play. The last line of the monologue is clearly a warning: you can't protect your children by being indifferent to the children of others.

There's a vast difference between making your audience uncomfortable and being anti-Semitic. To see anti-Semitism here is to construe erroneously the words spoken by the worst of Churchill's characters as a statement from the playwright about all Jews as preternaturally filled with a viciousness unique among humankind. But to do this is, again, to distort what Churchill wrote. The monologue belongs to and emerges from a particular dramatic action that makes the eruption inevitable and horrifying.

The play traces the processes of repressed speech. The violence forcing that repression comes initially from without; the monologue gives voice to a violence that's moved inside. The play stages the return of the repressed, an explosion of threatened defensiveness that, unexpressed and unowned, has turned into rage. Encountering it is terrifying; we don't

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want to own it. But that doesn't mean we don't recognize it. And sad to say, there's no sentiment in the monologue's spew that we have not heard or read at some point from presumed "defenders" of Israel (as even a cursory survey of the Internet demonstrates: for example, the chilling story in the March 20 *Ha'aretz* about some Israeli army units making T-shirts celebrating civilian casualties and rape in Gaza).

The siege of Gaza over the past several years, which nearly starved a high proportion of the population, was unconscionable in humanitarian terms, but an even worse corner was turned this past winter. A placard at a peace-movement demonstration in Tel Aviv in January proclaimed, Slaughter Is Not Security. Apart from some brave thousands who took to the Israeli streets throughout the weeks of Operation Cast Lead, a large majority of Israelis—and their supporters in America—were convinced that the carnage was, indeed, justified as defense. Some even boasted about it. In America's weekly Jewish newspaper, the *Forward*, the president of the Reform movement, Rabbi Eric Yoffie, in an op-ed defending the Gaza invasion, disparaged more hawkish Israel supporters for "the obscene, cowboy-like delight" in "the damage Israel's army is able to inflict." But even when softened into Yoffie's remorseful notion of the Gaza offensive as a "tragic necessity, unwelcome but inevitable," the justification amounts to the same thing: better them than us. Such dehumanizing rhetoric is common in mainstream Jewish-American and Israeli discourse (and, in fact, in all military conflicts). Churchill, a non-Jew, had the chutzpah to strip that rhetoric of its hangdog, contrite camouflage and reflect it back to us: "tell her all I feel is happy it's not her."

That hideous sentiment, however, is not the play's final word. There are three more lines:

> Don't tell her that.
> Tell her we love her.
> Don't frighten her.

A playwright's presumptuous job is to imagine others, and the others Churchill has imagined in this play are Jews. If there's anger in the writing, there's also empathy, tenderness and intimacy. Nothing is more intimate than discussions between parents about what to tell their children; no act of speech is more carefully weighed or more fiercely protected. This is a family play, told from within the family. It concludes with love, and it concludes with fear.

Seven Jewish Children is a play. It must be read with an awareness of the incompleteness of plays on paper, destined as they are for collective rather than singular experience, for warm bodies speaking the lines, for empathy, for the variability of interpretation. All plays require that directors and actors make considered choices. Performance produces meaning. If an actor stresses "tell" in the line "Don't tell her that," it might suggest, That's true, but don't let her know. But if "that" is emphasized, it might mean, How can you even think such an outrageous thing? And much will depend on how the actor strikes the first word, "Don't"—collegially or adversarially.

Churchill ups the interpretive ante by leaving everything, beyond the lines themselves, to her interpreters. The monologue and the lines that follow it will carry different meanings if spoken, say, by a grandmother with a Yiddish accent or by a young man in an Israeli army uniform. Or by, say, a Korean-American man or a Chicana. Or, since the play is so short and could be watched three or four times in a row, with the lines spoken each time by different actors. Any director and company approaching the play will have to decide whether and how the audience will be made aware of the radical degree to which the written text has insisted, through its lack of character identification or stage action, on collaboration. Surely it's essential to understanding *Seven Jewish Children* that against the specifics of the script, the playwright, relinquishing nearly all traditional authorial control, engineers a far-greater-than-usual slippage among text and performance and audience reception, producing an unusually large amount of room for variant readings.

The 'others' Churchill, a non-Jew, has imagined, are Jews. If there's anger in the writing, there's also empathy, tenderness and intimacy.

And it is perhaps only on stage that the central characters of the play come into their own: the eponymous seven Jewish children who are its heroines. We never see them. Our empathic imaginations are enlisted by the playwright. We have to conjure them.

In the opening scene of Churchill's *Far Away*, a girl asks her aunt about beatings she's seen her uncle commit. What's most terrifying is how easily the aunt placates, justifies and quells her niece's will to question. But in Churchill's play for Gaza, the girls never stop asking.

This is a powerful trope in Jewish culture; it's the questioning child around whom the Passover Seder is built. We're left to hope that this girl we've never seen, the last scene's girl, won't become one of the Israeli teenagers who recently gave the truly frightening Avigdor Lieberman the highest share of the votes in a high school election poll. Perhaps she's a pain in the ass, this girl; perhaps she'll keep questioning. Perhaps she refuses to succumb to those in her family whose loving desire is to protect her by not speaking, by not saying. Perhaps she's realizing that their repression of the truth has become not only misguided and immoral but fatal; for nothing survives on lies, on a denial of reality; eventually, reality wins. Perhaps she's found out about a relative of hers, mentioned earlier: "Don't tell her her cousin refused to serve in the army."

Perhaps this girl will grow up to work for justice. ■

Caryl Churchill has made Seven Jewish Children *available for productions without licensing or royalties for presenters who request audience contributions for the London-based relief organization Medical Aid for Palestinians. The play can be downloaded at royalcourttheatre.com/file/downloads/sevenjewishchildren.pdf.*

The Dirt on Clean Coal

The coal industry presents itself as committed to environmental sustainability—but is it?

by ARI BERMAN

In 1955 the Tennessee Valley Authority built what was at the time the world's largest coal plant, near Kingston, Tennessee. More than fifty years later, the Kingston Fossil Plant produces enough electricity to power 670,000 homes and emits nearly 11 million tons of carbon dioxide—the greenhouse gas most responsible for global warming—each year. On December 22 a dike broke at the plant, sending more than a billion gallons of toxic black sludge downhill into the ground, water and homes of eastern Tennessee. The infected area was some forty times larger than the infamous Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska and became known as the "nightmare before Christmas."

The spill underscored the negative images the word "coal" often conjures up—battered communities in Appalachia, underground explosions, exploited miners, brutal strikes and black lung. Yet the American coal industry, which pumps 2 billion tons of CO_2 into the atmosphere each year and contributes more than one-third of the nation's overall greenhouse gas emissions, is nothing if not resilient. Despite rising public concern about global warming and a growing awareness that coal is an irrevocably dirty business, the industry is spending millions of dollars on a slick messaging campaign stressing its "commitment to clean."

Critics argue that "clean coal" means anything the industry wants it to, pointing out that of the country's 616 coal plants, none are carbon-free or close to it. The viability of an environmentally sustainable future for coal is questionable, and so is the industry's commitment to cleaning itself up. The Center for American Progress recently released a report showing that the country's biggest coal companies have spent only a fraction of their multibillion-dollar profits developing technologies to curb carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants. "The ads and other public clean coal activities are merely designed to delay global warming solutions without suffering a public relations black eye," the CAP report stated.

"Clean coal is like a healthy cigarette," Al Gore likes to say. "It does not exist." Gore is spearheading the Reality Campaign, a countereffort with environmental groups like the Sierra Club featuring an ad by the Coen brothers that's known as "No Country for Coal Men." Ted Venners, founder of Evergreen Energy—a company in Colorado that reduces CO_2 emissions from coal by 8 percent compared with traditional coal—shares Gore's skepticism. "It *is* an oxymoron," Venners says. "Even after the process of cleaning coal, it's not clean."

In the coming months, as Congress and the Obama administration dole out billions in stimulus dollars to kick-start a green economy and draft sweeping legislation to curb climate change, the future of coal will be at the heart of the debate over energy policy. The ultimate impact of the clean coal lobby will be measured by its influence on Capitol Hill and the corresponding outcome of pending legislation. For that reason, this controversial campaign raises a number of questions that will help shape our energy future for years to come. How serious is the industry about developing clean coal, and can it happen? Does the latest message indicate a more environmentally friendly policy, or just a crafty makeover? Can the same people who told us that global warming didn't exist—or that it was a good thing—suddenly be trusted to help solve the climate crisis?

KAREN CALDICOTT

The driving force behind coal's rebranding effort is the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a $40 million campaign funded by all the major components of the modern coal industry—mining companies, power plants, railroads, rural electric co-ops. ACCCE's ad blitz features sleek piano music and high-tech images of the globe; a panoply of workers voicing their belief in new technology; and, of course, President Obama, speaking at a campaign stop in coal-rich southwestern Virginia. "This is America," Obama tells the crowd. "We figured out how to put a man on the moon in ten years. You can't tell me we can't figure out how to burn coal that we mine right here in the United States of America and make it work." The ad closes with Obama supporters chanting a familiar refrain: "Yes we can!" To promote

Ari Berman is a Nation *contributing writer.* *Research support for this article was provided by the Puffin Foundation Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute. Special thanks to DeSmogBlog for additional research support.*

its message, ACCCE hired a top ad firm out of Vegas and a well-connected Washington PR outfit, spending three times as much last year as the health insurance industry did on the "Harry and Louise" ads in 1993–94.

ACCCE's office in downtown Washington is empty, but not for long. The group just hired Paul Bailey, a former operative for the oil and electric power industries, as its top lobbyist and will soon fill three more upper-level positions, bolstering a fleet of fixers who spent more money than anyone else—nearly $10 million last year—lobbying on climate change–related legislation, according to the Center for Public Integrity. For now, most of ACCCE's staff work elsewhere, in regional offices and from a nondescript office park in Alexandria, Virginia, at 333 John Carlyle Street. That location is infamous, having housed two radical right-wing groups—the Western Fuels Association and the Greening Earth Society—that formed the backbone of the effort to disprove the science of global warming. Out of the widely discredited denialist movement, ACCCE grew.

US coal companies have spent millions on an image makeover but almost nothing on new technologies that may curb carbon emissions.

Naomi Oreskes, a professor of history and science studies at the University of California, San Diego, compares the strategy of these early groups to that of the tobacco industry, which for decades argued that cigarettes didn't cause cancer. "Doubt is our product," Brown & Williamson stated in an internal memo in 1969, "since it is the best means of competing with the 'body of fact' that exists in the mind of the general public." In 1992 a scientific consensus was emerging around the seriousness of global warming, and President George H.W. Bush attended an international climate change conference in Brazil that laid the groundwork for the Kyoto Protocol. Around that time the Western Fuels Association—a consortium of coal producers—introduced an ad campaign to "reposition global warming as theory (not fact)," Oreskes details in a forthcoming paper. Its print and radio ads posed questions like "If the Earth is getting warmer, why is Kentucky getting colder?" and "How much are you willing to pay to solve a problem that may not exist?" On Earth Day 1998, Western Fuels launched a front group called the Greening Earth Society to promote "positive environmental thinking," namely, the idea that increased CO_2 emissions would benefit humanity. The group called CO_2 "an amazingly effective aerial fertilizer" and posited that global warming would boost agricultural productivity and create a healthier planet. Greening Earth's founder, Fred Palmer, presented a ready-made villain for the environmental movement. "Every time you turn your car on and you burn fossil fuels and you put CO_2 into the air, you're doing the work of the Lord," Palmer said.

Greening Earth and Western Fuels worked in partnership with the Center for Energy and Economic Development (CEED), an industry group co-founded by railroad exec (and future Bush II treasury secretary) John Snow and Steve Miller, a top aide to former Kentucky Governor Brereton Jones. In the mid-'90s CEED lobbied against the Kyoto Protocol, which it called "wrong in its science, wrong in its approach, wrong to surrender, wrong for America." The group employed the research of Frederick Seitz—a fixture in the tobacco industry—to argue that CO_2 was "NOT A Pollutant" but rather "Earth's Basic Building Block." "We caution policymakers to fully examine the evidence available regarding climate change and global climate modeling," Miller said at the time. "Indeed, many scientists maintain that [greenhouse gas] emissions from electric power plants are not contributing significantly to overall warming trends."

CEED and its ilk found a receptive message on Capitol Hill, where the Senate unanimously opposed the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, making the United States the world's only industrialized nation to ignore the threat of climate change. Yet a message of denial and confusion got the industry only so far, so the main backers of CEED, including Western Fuels and major coal producers like Peabody and Southern Company, formed Americans for Balanced Energy Choices (ABEC) to promote clean coal.

Going forward, CEED and ABEC spent less time disputing the science of global warming and instead featured coal as the lifeblood of the American economy, maintaining that any regulation to reduce emissions would be disastrous. The industry had a willing booster in George W. Bush, who quickly broke his campaign promise to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant and appointed coal lobbyists to top positions in his administration, granting the industry a long and now familiar wish list of favors, including gutting the Clean Air Act and easing standards for mountaintop mining.

But increasing public awareness of global warming and the Democrats' takeover of Congress in 2006 foreshadowed challenges for the industry. A September 2007 poll commissioned by ABEC showed that 51 percent of "opinion elites"—a sample of upper-income, well-educated, business-oriented Americans—believed that coal was not a fuel for America's future. In 2007 fifty-nine new coal plants were rejected or put on hold; only a dozen have been built since 1990. "We're walking around with a bull's-eye on our forehead," Jim Rogers of Duke Energy told journalist Jeff Goodell.

CEED and ABEC correctly recognized that the industry had to be *for* something, rather than against everything. In 2007 ABEC quadrupled its ad budget to combat what it called "outdated perceptions about coal," and in early 2008 CEED and ABEC morphed into ACCCE, delivering the fine-tuned message that global warming is real and that clean coal can help solve it. The group used the research from its 2007 poll as the basis for its huge marketing campaign, designed a logo of an orange power cord plugged into a rock of coal and jumped into the presidential campaign.

ACCCE understood that the road to the White House frequently travels through coal country, in states like Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Indiana, Missouri and Colorado. Even

Iowa, a place synonymous with corn, gets four-fifths of its energy from coal. So the group showed up early and often, recruiting a "grassroots army" of staffers in bright blue T-shirts to trail the candidates, passing out promotional materials at every stop, co-sponsoring presidential debates and running ads in key swing states. The group spent $2 million at the Democratic convention alone. At a moment of soaring gas prices and deep economic insecurity, ACCCE conveyed a series of easily digestible talking points: 50 percent of the nation's electricity comes from coal; coal is 77 percent cleaner (when you don't include CO_2 emissions) now compared with 1970; America is the Saudi Arabia of coal; coal is cheap, plentiful and clean.

One moment during the campaign, in particular, illustrated the enduring power of the coal industry and the emerging imprint of clean coal. At a mid-September stop in Maumee, Ohio, Joe Biden told a questioner on a rope line, "We're not supporting 'clean coal'.... No coal plants here in America. Build them, if they're going to build them, over there [in China] and make 'em clean, because they're killing you." John McCain seized on the comment, launching the Coalition to Protect Coal Jobs, and supporters at a Sarah Palin rally in Ohio chanted, "Mine, baby, mine!" CEED co-founder Steve Miller, who had become president of ACCCE, urged Biden to "clarify" his remarks. The Obama campaign quickly responded with a Clean Coal Jobs Task Force of coal-state Democrats. "I support clean coal technology," Obama said in the final presidential debate. "Doesn't make me popular with environmentalists."

On election day ACCCE released a poll showing that 69 percent of "opinion leaders" supported coal as a fuel for America's future, a huge turnaround from the previous September, and Obama prevailed in coal-rich states such as Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania. ACCCE even got Biden to sign a "clean coal" hat.

"There absolutely has been a change in message," ACCCE chief spokesman Joe Lucas admits. "It's a pro-technology message." Lucas, an amiable Southerner who likes to mix it up with his opponents in the environmental movement, grew up in coal-rich Kentucky. He served as the spokesman for the Labor Department's Mine Safety and Health Administration under Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush and joined the Energy Department during the Clinton Administration, where he says he was affectionately known as Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary's "coal hack." He went to work for the coal industry in 1998 and has been with it ever since. Lucas is a Democrat, but his deputy, Nick Meads, ran the Republicans' 2008 campaign in Virginia.

I met Lucas in DC on March 3, the day after 2,500 environmental advocates descended on Capitol Hill for what was billed as the country's "largest protest against global warming." The coal industry—and a coal-fired power plant that operates just blocks from the Capitol—were the targets. I asked Lucas about the discrepancy in message between his current group and its past associates, like the Greening Earth Society. "We never said that there was going to be a beneficial global warming phe-

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nomenon," he told me. "Some groups did. We're not scientists. And we never played scientists. We've only repeated what the scientific community has said writ large."

When asked by CNN recently to give a yes or no answer to the question of whether burning coal contributes to global warming, Lucas responded, "I don't know. I am not a scientist." He gave a more Rumsfeldian answer when I posed a similar question. "Here's what is the absolute truth about the science of climate change," Lucas said. "There are certain things which we are certain about. There are other things that we are less certain about. And there are many things about which we are uncertain." But, he added, "given where we're going with technology, we don't see that any remaining uncertainties should be an impediment for action."

Although the message on coal has changed, many of the actors—and their actions—remain the same. For instance, Ned Leonard, a longtime Western Fuels operative, became a vice president at CEED and is now the go-to guy on clean coal technology at ACCCE. One of the group's funders, the massive Georgia-based utility Southern Company, spent the better part of $14 million successfully lobbying against Congressional legislation that would have required the United States to generate 15 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020. And a few weeks after the group was formed, ACCCE lobbied against a bill introduced by Senators Joe Lieberman and John Warner that would have mandated a 60 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Lieberman-Warner bill proposed hundreds of billions in subsidies to the coal industry, but nevertheless ACCCE ran print and radio ads against it, calling it a "job killer" and arguing that any regulation of CO_2 should be left to the states—even though the group also opposed state-based regulation. Such shell games have become a hallmark of the industry.

The industry lobbied against a bill to reduce emissions and backed one that would have rendered pollution targets meaningless.

The EPA is preparing to regulate CO_2 as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act, and Congress will likely draft cap-and-trade legislation this year. As the debate heats up, major business outfits like the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers are sure to fight back aggressively, as are more traditional coal companies like Peabody and Southern. Lucas says ACCCE plans to spend "at least as much" on lobbying as it did last year, but he promises a less confrontational approach. "We shouldn't focus on whether carbon dioxide will be regulated (it will), or if ACCCE could possibly support regulation (we do)," he wrote on his blog. "The conversation now should be about *how* we're going to reduce CO_2 emissions." Though it opposed Lieberman-Warner, Lucas says, ACCCE supports "a timely adoption of a mandatory federal program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions." He points to a bill drafted last year by Representatives John Dingell of Detroit and Rick Boucher of southwestern Virginia as something ACCCE could support.

The Dingell-Boucher bill was widely criticized by environmentalists for containing too many loopholes for industry, rendering the pollution targets essentially meaningless. In the new Congress, enviros scored a major victory when California's Henry Waxman replaced Dingell as chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Ed Markey of Massachusetts supplanted Boucher as chair of the subcommittee on energy and environment. Waxman and Markey are drafting global warming legislation they hope will clear the committee by Memorial Day. Still, the politics of the issue are dicey. "There won't be enough votes to pass the bill if it forces economic disruption," Boucher told me. "That means not forcing electric utilities to abandon the use of coal."

The prospects for passing a cap-and-trade bill are significantly tougher in the Senate. Ten coal-state Democrats announced last year that they would oppose Lieberman-Warner unless it was substantially modified, a faction that now comprises as many as twenty-two Democrats, Lucas says. The *New York Times* dubbed it a "brown state-green state clash." Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown, a leader of that coalition, says, "I'm almost certain there'll be climate change legislation [this year], and I'm almost certain I'll vote for it. But the pain needs to be shared equally." As of now, Brown says, he's concerned that "the cost of cap-and-trade is borne overwhelmingly by coal states."

The coal industry hopes to exploit such economic anxiety by pushing for a watered-down version of an already watered-down bill. (The latest ACCCE ad highlights the affordability of coal and its ability to sustain jobs that will help "get our economy back on its feet.") "The analogy I like to use is that it's like being on a boat in the middle of the ocean," Lucas says. "If you're going 100 knots due north and you're on a big boat and you try and immediately go 100 knots due south, you're going to wreck that boat." He adds, "It's very easy but not too practical to sit there and say, 'Coal will go away,' when we all know that coal is not going to go away. It's going to grow here in America, and even if it were to go away here in America, it's going to grow exponentially in other parts of the world."

To capitalize on the prevalence of coal in the United States while heeding the dangers of global warming, the industry is pushing what is known as carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology, a complicated process by which CO_2 emissions are stored deep underground rather than pumped into the air. Theoretically, CCS would reduce emissions by 90 percent but also decrease efficiency and increase cost compared with traditional coal production. [For much more on CCS, see Jeff Goodell's "The Dirty Rock," May 7, 2007.] The feasibility of instituting CCS on a large scale, at a price worth doing, is the subject of intense debate inside the coal industry and the environmental movement. Greenpeace calls the technology a "false hope," while the Natural Resources Defense Council cautions that CCS must be quickly developed in order to export it to developing countries like China, which has been rapidly build-

ing new coal plants with few, if any, pollution controls.

It's not at all clear that CCS will catch on anytime soon in America. In 2003 the Bush administration, with much fanfare, announced the building of the country's first zero-emissions power plant, in downstate Illinois. FutureGen was supposed to be the centerpiece of the administration's strategy for clean coal and a model public-private partnership. Unfortunately, costs skyrocketed, the government footed most of the bill and after five years of planning, the Energy Department killed the project in January 2008. "In retrospect, FutureGen appears to have been nothing more than a public relations ploy for Bush Administration officials to make it appear to the public and the world that the United States was doing something to address global warming," an exhaustive House Science Committee report recently stated. The abandonment of the project, DOE staffers concluded, set back the development of CCS by at least a decade, deferring widespread deployment until 2040.

The failure of FutureGen reinforced the skepticism of even some in the industry toward the technology. "To do this on a big scale, for every coal-fired power plant, is going to be very, very difficult," says Ted Venners of Evergreen Energy. Venners has been hearing about the promise of a pollution-free future for coal since he joined the National Coal Council in 1984. "I'm 61," he says, "and I will not see zero-emission coal plants in my lifetime." A friend of his in the coal business recently likened CCS to "a lot of foreplay and no satisfaction."

In the meantime, environmental groups are urging Obama to declare a moratorium on all new coal plants until CCS is ready to go, whenever that may be. "We should not delude ourselves about the likelihood that that's going to occur in the near term or even the midterm," Gore told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January. Yet despite doubts about its future, CCS remains a favored technology on Capitol Hill, where many members represent coal-rich states and districts. "There's a consensus that we need to spend the money in order to prove or disprove this," says a senior staffer on the House Select Committee for Energy Independence and Global Warming. "I realize that notion can sound disturbing to some people."

The stimulus bill includes $3.4 billion for CCS research, some of which may go to revive FutureGen. (The legislation also includes $60 billion for renewable energy—a sea change in terms of funding—and the final version stripped $50 billion in loan guarantees for the nuclear and coal industries from the bill.) An energy bill introduced last year by Representative Markey—chair of the select committee—included $5 billion a year for CCS research, with the provision that it expire in 2020, giving the industry more than a decade to prove that it can make the technology work.

But is it worth throwing so much money at an experiment that may very well fail? There are other, cleaner options: groups as disparate as Google and Greenpeace have drawn up detailed blueprints to wean America almost totally off fossil fuels in the coming decades. If Congress and the Obama administration are serious about treating global warming as a pressing economic and ecological threat, coal will struggle to remain relevant. If it hopes to do so, the industry must follow its ads with tangible actions. Nothing less than its survival is at stake. ■

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Mo(u)rning in El Salvador

Shaking off the legacy of military dictatorship, the people elect the FMLN's Mauricio Funes.

by ROBERTO LOVATO

In Izalco, El Salvador, an idyllic but very poor village nestled under the gaze of the great volcano of the same name, I asked Juliana Ama to help me understand how the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), the guerrillas-turned-political-party, had managed to triumph over the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) in the presidential election on March 15, ending the right-wing party's twenty-year reign. Ama guided me to a dusty, football field–size dirt lot adjacent to a church. The 61-year-old schoolteacher said nothing at first, staring meditatively at a round spot blackened by a campfire or some burnt offering. Then she said simply, "It's our dead."

Her explanation lacked the revolutionary bravado and the *análisis político* heard from chain-smoking former guerrilla commanders and Facebook-using radical students in San Salvador, the capital. Instead, she threw open her arms and said, "Most of the people killed in the Matanza [the Great Killing] are buried here." Before us lay the remains of many of the 20,000 to 30,000 mostly indigenous Pipil-Nahuat killed in January 1932 on the orders of military dictator Maximiliano Hernández.

In slow, measured speech, Ama, one of a tiny fraction of Salvadorans who identify themselves as indigenous, explained how indigenous peasants like her great-great-granduncle, the peasant leader Feliciano Ama of Izalco, and others from the western coffee-growing part of El Salvador rose up against deadly poverty, stolen land and other abuses in Depression-era El Salvador, only to be brutally slaughtered.

"We've organized commemoration ceremonies on this spot since 2001," said Ama, as she pointed at the darkened patch on the lot. "People who can't remember and are silent are people who are submitted (*sumisos*). Those ceremonies made it normal and acceptable to be open about the loss of long ago, the loss that still lives with us. Nothing like this was ever possible before, and I think that the ceremony made it possible for people to start being more open about political feelings too."

My initial reason for visiting Izalco during the country's presidential election season was that I'd learned of ARENA's defeat in the Izalco mayoral race in January—the party's first defeat since it was founded in 1981 by Roberto D'Aubuisson, who also founded El Salvador's notorious death squads. The death squads, backed by the right-wing military government, were responsible for killing many of the 80,000 people who died during the bloody civil war of 1980–92.

The FMLN's recent victory in small, neglected Izalco—after campaigning on a message of change backed by a coalition of Catholics, students and evangelicals—had political analysts buzzing about how it might herald a national trend in the lead-up to the historic presidential election. Even some ARENA loyalists I interviewed quoted D'Aubuisson's prophetic maxim: "The day we lose Izalco, that day will be the end of the party."

RODRIGO ABD/AP

A young supporter of FMLN presidential candidate, now president-elect, Mauricio Funes

In Izalco it became clear how Ama's explanation of the FMLN's victory aligned perfectly with the central lesson of revolutionary political warfare that some former Salvadoran guerrilla commanders told me they'd learned in Russia, Vietnam and other Communist-bloc countries in the 1960s and '70s: the spirit of the people matters most. The power that broke the chain of oligarchies and military dictatorships that shackled El Salvador for 130 years was the will of the people to break their silence.

Few embody this will to break the silence like Mauricio Funes, the FMLN candidate and the first leftist elected president in the history of El Salvador.

Funes, a 49-year-old former journalist, rose to prominence in no small part thanks to the democratic space created by the signing of the peace accords ending the war in 1992. Until then, the seventy-year rule of oligarchs and dictators made freedom of expression a rarity. My first memories of Funes are as the talk-show host and commentator my family in San Salvador would listen to in the late '80s as they huddled around a small, battered black-and-white television set during their lunch breaks.

As the grip of state military-run television loosened in the postwar period, Funes became the country's most popular TV personality in his role as host of *Entrevista al Dia* (Interview of

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the Day), El Salvador's equivalent of *Meet the Press*.

Hosting *al Dia*, on which he grilled and debated left- and right-leaning guests with his famously mercurial intelligence, helped to make Funes a symbol of the openness ushered in by the signing of the peace accords. After losing every presidential race since laying down its arms to become a political party in 1992, the FMLN embraced change. With the help of people like Funes's mentor Hato Hasbun—a sociology professor who worked closely with the six Jesuit priests killed by the military during the FMLN offensive in 1989—the party finally recognized that putting up presidential candidates who were former guerrilla commanders or wartime opposition leaders might not be the best strategy for winning over an electorate trying to overcome the war's painful legacy. The party chose Funes, who was neither a combatant nor a member of the FMLN during the war.

In doing so, the former guerrillas gave their party a much-needed upgrade that allowed them to use the FMLN's legendary organizational capacity (during the war, the US State Department called the FMLN one of the "best organized" and "most effective" people's movements in Latin America in the last fifty years) to meet the political requirements of the media age. And as a Jesuit-influenced intellectual, Funes also gave the FMLN—an organization with many leaders who were themselves profoundly influenced by liberation theology and first organized in Christian base communities—some ideological comfort.

When I interviewed Funes on the night of his victory, in the restaurant of a San Salvador hotel, the first thing he did was echo the thinking of one of those who courageously broke El Salvador's silence. "Now we need a government like the one envisioned by [Archbishop of El Salvador] Óscar Arnulfo Romero, who, in his prophetic message, said that the church should have a preferential option for the poor. Paraphrasing Monseñor Romero, I would say that this government should have a preferential option for the poor, for those who need a robust government to get ahead and to be able to compete in this world of disequilibrium under fair conditions."

Like almost every Salvadoran I spoke with after Funes's victory, the candidate said he wished a deceased family member, in his case his brother killed during the war, was with him to share the moment.

And like Juliana Ama, he too rooted his victory in the legacy of silence and struggle from Izalco: "Our history—what happened in 1932, the poverty of the '70s that caused the armed conflict in the '80s and the state in which many in the countryside like Izalco still find themselves today—these can be explained fundamentally by the unjust distribution of wealth, the use of the government to support the process of concentrating wealth."

After talking with Funes at the hotel, I went to the Escalon neighborhood, where those who have benefited from the concentration of the country's wealth live and do business behind the big, heavily guarded walls of gated buildings and fortressed mansions. For reasons I don't know, but imagine have something to do with poetic justice, the FMLN decided to hold its massive victory celebration that Sunday night on Escalon Boulevard.

The neighborhood was also where the FMLN launched its offensive on San Salvador in 1989. After the demise of Communism put in doubt the survival of Latin American revolutionary movements, including El Salvador's, the FMLN made a strategic decision to bring its guerrilla army of young men and women and older adults, some of whom had little to no combat experience, into the capital, leading to some of the bloodiest battles of the war.

I walked along the crowded blocks of the Escalon with my good friend Joaquin Chávez, a fellow in the NYU history department, who founded the first Central American studies program in the United States with three other colleagues and me. Passing by Citibank and Scotiabank, OfficeMax, McDonald's and other corporate buildings on the Escalon never felt so exhilarating. The major difference was the hundreds of thousands of boisterously happy, red-shirted, mostly poor children, youth and families waving homemade red-and-white FMLN flags.

The former guerrillas gave their party a much-needed upgrade that allowed them to meet the political requirements of the media age.

For his part, my bookish, bespectacled historian friend Joaquin, who had lost many friends and family members during the war, was initially pretty academic about what the electoral victory meant.

"The origins of the war were not ideological. What brought on the armed struggle," began Joaquin, whose current research looks at the role of intellectuals in the origins of the war, "was the reaction of various groups to the repression of the state. If the government had allowed fair elections in 1972 and 1977, there would have been no war." His voice started to crack slightly with emotion. "And that's what makes tonight so hope-inspiring: it makes possible a political transition through legal and electoral means."

Watching the wave of thousands of mostly young FMLN supporters walk, sing and dance as they held handpainted signs with messages like Misión Cumplida: Compañeros Caídos en La Lucha (Mission Accomplished: Compañeros Who Fell in the Struggle), Joaquin reminisced, not as the accomplished historian but as the former guerrilla leader: "I remember being here on Seventy-fifth Street (during the 1989 offensive) to pick up the bodies of dead and injured young combatants. They were the ages of these kids walking here now."

He continued: "Tonight I feel like they didn't die for nothing. Spiritually, it feels like a weight has been taken off of you, where you feel the absence of those who initiated these processes. This is an explosion of happiness and a celebration of rebellion, a triumph of the 1932 rebellion of Feliciano Ama

and the indigenous people."

Back at the empty lot, near the blackened patch of dirt that is ground zero of revolutionary El Salvador, Juliana Ama pondered the escape from silence her country had begun. Despite the threats the commemoration ceremonies provoked, she said, "our ceremony is not intended as a political act. It is first and foremost a spiritual act. We have no choice; we can't remain and suffer in silence." Her eighth-grader son, Alex Oswaldo Calzadia Chille, stood solemnly nearby.

Asked what he thought the political turns in his country portended, the rather reticent, dark-skinned 14-year-old star student, soccer forward and drummer at the Mario Calvo school responded with an unexpected forcefulness. "I'm Pipil (Indian). Feliciano Ama, he's my family and was killed defending the land against the government, like many people do today." As if he'd been waiting for the opportunity to speak even more, he declared, "My family voted for the FMLN because they wanted change." His intense brown eyes alive with the energy one imagines his rebellious ancestor had, Alex added, "When I'm old enough, so will I." ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

Copenhagen negotiations and indeed for the larger imperative of humanity reducing its greenhouse gas emissions enough to (perhaps) avoid the worst impacts of climate change. We also agree that rich nations will have to pay for at least part of what poor nations do to cut emissions. But the hard part is structuring a deal that will attract wide enough support to get governments to agree and implement it. Many have made proposals, including Athanasiou's group, EcoEquity. I'd welcome a longer explanation from him about how to move this idea from the stage of laudable principle—the rich, who caused the problem, should pay the poor, who didn't—into hard-nosed practice. Whatever schema is chosen, the key to making it happen will be the same, I suspect, as for the global green deal: intense, sustained pressure from mobilized citizens here and abroad. Those wishing to help should contact the Climate Action Network (climatenetwork.org).

As for James O'Callahan: if he thinks talking about human civilization surviving climate change "is essentially meaningless," why does he bother to complain? His critique is long on pseudo-learned double talk but amounts to a counsel of nihilistic despair. As the father of a 3-year-old daughter, I find that mindset less than useless. Assume we're doomed and we are. Dare instead to hope and push and work, and we might, with luck, save ourselves and the planet we all, including the microbes, depend on. I know which side I'm on, and the end of O'Callahan's letter reveals his. Although overconsumption by the rich minority does far more environmental damage than the excessive numbers of the poor, O'Callahan urges a course of population control and "egalitarian terror." Something tells me he isn't volunteering himself or his upscale neighbors as the first victims.

Mark Hertsgaard

Brain-in-Vat Speaks to Brain-in-Vat

Sleepy Hollow, N.Y.

I agree with Alva Noë ["Back Talk," March 16] that we do not yet have an explanation of life. I also agree that facile interpretations of MRI and PET brain scans (they are real, not "so-called") that conflate metabolic changes with thought processes should be viewed with caution and skepticism. However, I disagree strongly that "consciousness doesn't happen inside us." One doesn't need to summon up Descartes or be a philosopher or a neuroscientist to know this. Consciousness can be extinguished rapidly by a chemical that targets the brain (anesthesia) or severe trauma to the brain (a boxer's knockout punch) or diseases that affect only the brain (strokes or encephalitis).

It is true that full development of human consciousness requires continuing interaction with the environment, but at the most fundamental level, we are, indeed, "brains in vats." This is disconcerting to many although it doesn't change my awe and, indeed, reverence for life, consciousness and the universe. The dangers of regarding the mind as "something that is achieved…[by a] sort of larger dynamic of interaction" is that this view can be used by some as a rationale to deny humane treatment of those with severe brain injuries or disease, or to change practical moral precepts and action in ways that look to their effects on the "larger dynamic," if not the afterlife, to the detriment of down-to-earth realities.

Norman J. Sissman, MD

Noë Replies

Berkeley, Calif.

I wrote *Out of Our Heads* not to deny the importance of the brain to human flourishing but rather to enable us to understand how what goes on in our heads supports our conscious lives. Neural processes are necessary for consciousness, as Dr. Sissman rightly insists. But that doesn't mean they are sufficient.

Dr. Sissman worries that due acknowledgment of the ways our conscious lives depend on our engagement with the world around us might justify the withholding of humane treatment from patients with brain injury. It would certainly justify no such thing, no more so than the idea that we are brains-in-vats would justify neglect for the quality of the environments in which we raise our children. We don't need to pretend that we are brains-in-vats to secure our moral commitments to others.

Alva Noë

Different Strokes Department

Tarpon Springs, Fla.

I consider myself an intelligent, educated person; I even taught freshman composition and an introduction to poetry course in college. So I dutifully read the poem "Dust in a Word" [Feb. 23]. Over and over. Trying to figure out what it meant and what I was missing. In desperation I e-mailed the poem to my daughter, who has a master's in English, and asked her to enlighten me. Her analysis was brilliant: "It's clearly about stickbugs who consume their mates, or housework and the plight of the stay-at-home dad, or bunnies."

Shirley Copperman

Clarification: Indirect Impact

In Eyal Press's March 30 "The Perfect Storm," Human Rights Watch is listed as a group that "had lost money through investment funds Madoff controlled." HRW had no money in Madoff funds; because of the scandal, it lost a $600,000 annual grant from the JEHT Foundation.

Books & the Arts.

The Wait

by ELAINE BLAIR

A few years ago during a family visit in St. Petersburg, my grandmother, who has never been outside Soviet borders, asked me if Russians now had, in their stores, everything that you could buy in the United States. I thought, for some reason, of shampoo and the eight or ten different kinds of it for sale at the Western-style supermarket in my grandmother's unassuming neighborhood. And I thought of the department stores and boutiques on Nevsky Prospect, where, if you wanted to spend more money on your shampoo, you had a choice of another eight or ten different European and American luxury brands. Then I thought of the dozens, possibly hundreds, of different brands of shampoos to be found in an American city, each with its own complicated semiotics signaling that the shampoo was high-tech or discount or handmade on a commune. How to explain the minute, absorbing consumer choices that made fools of us every day? "You have as much of everything as anyone could want," I told her. "But for some reason we have…even more."

At this point it's only a difference of degree between the obscene bounty of America's consumer republic and the slightly more modest bounty (for those who can afford it) of free-market Russia. But for many decades of the past century the universe of Soviet consumption was the flip side of the American one: many people had enough money to buy the things they coveted, but such items only rarely appeared in stores. These peculiar conditions of Second World consumerism are the background of *The Queue*, the first novel—originally published in 1985 in Russian, in Paris—by Vladimir Sorokin, one of Russia's funniest, smartest and most confounding living writers. Sorokin, born in 1955, has become an elder statesman of Russian postmodernism, with a career spanning Soviet stagnation, perestroika and the transformation of Russia into a free-market and increasingly autocratic state.

EBERHARD SCHORR

Vladimir Sorokin

The Queue, which is being published for the first time in the United States, is set in an enormous line that forms one summer afternoon in the 1980s in Moscow, a line that about 2,000 people eventually join, over the course of two days, in order to have a chance to buy—something. It's never entirely clear what they're so eager to buy. In one of the novel's running jokes, Sorokin keeps hinting at different kinds of items. At first the goods seem to be shoes from Yugoslavia (or possibly Czechoslovakia or Sweden), then jeans from the United States, then suede jackets from Turkey. Certainly they are imports:

The Queue
By Vladimir Sorokin.
Translated by Sally Laird.
New York Review Books.
263 pp. Paper $14.95.

Elaine Blair is the author of Literary St. Petersburg. *Her writing has appeared in* The New York Review of Books, n+1 *and other publications.*

the Soviet versions of all these things could be bought in a store without much queuing, but their shoddiness was a familiar, insulting and inescapable fact of Soviet life. David Remnick recalls in *Lenin's Tomb*, his book about the fall of the Soviet Union, an exhibit he attended in 1989 at Moscow's Exhibition of Economic Achievements. Mounted in the frank spirit of glasnost, it was called "The Exhibit of Poor-Quality Goods" and featured "ruptured shoes, rusted samovars, chipped stew pots, unraveled shuttlecocks, crushed cans of fish, and, the show-stopper, a bottle of mineral water with a tiny dead mouse floating inside." One could blame perverse incentives, mismanaged supply chains and bureaucratic corruption for this state of squalor; but two customers in Sorokin's queue hit upon a more straightforward explanation while comparing American and Soviet economies: "They have to work their asses off over there, but here if you come drunk to work it's no big deal."

The Queue is written entirely in dialogue, composed of bits of conversations that take place among the people waiting in line. The most pressing subject for the queuers is what they're about to buy. They wonder about the color and style of the goods (Gray-blue? Brown? Leather or faux suede? Do they have astrakhan collars?) and the country of origin. A certain camaraderie forms among the queuers: they exchange friendly advice (where to buy cabbages and carnations, and which foreign brand of stereo is best) and apply a great deal of ingenuity to making the line less wearisome. When someone in the queue reports that there is a kvass stand nearby, an enterprising comrade has the idea of rerouting the line so that everyone can walk by the stand and buy a drink. And then there are the general protocols of the Soviet queue to be observed: in order to keep such a long line going overnight, one of the saleswomen assigns everyone a number in the evening and reads the roll call the next day to reconstruct the line. Sorokin devotes about thirty pages to documenting the roll call, dozens of names and yeses, punctuated by the irritable reprimands of the saleswoman. This is the essential absurdity of the workers' paradise in the 1970s and '80s—the cooperation, the cleverness, the colossal waste of effort required to work the system to procure a pair of sneakers or jeans.

Shortages of goods, and Soviet citizens' acute desperation for goods, are the wellspring of generations of Soviet jokes, private and literary. When the devil visits 1930s Moscow in Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* (written mostly in the '30s but not published in full until 1973), he makes a guest appearance in a variety show as a magician. Among other inexplicable tricks, he turns the stage into a Parisian boutique selling silk dresses and stockings, leather shoes and designer hats. The women in the audience storm the stage, change out of their clothes and throw on every last piece of European merchandise. They leave behind an enormous pile of their shabby Soviet-made dresses and shoes. Even in the Brezhnev era, when the most dire shortages—for staples like butter and eggs—were a thing of the past, waiting, and not getting, was still part of the essential Soviet condition. The Muscovites in Sorokin's queue live in a universe of ten-year waiting lists for cars and apartments, on the one hand, and the sparsely stocked shelves of Soviet grocers and shops on the other.

Though no narrator ever intrudes on *The Queue*'s conversations, characters do crystallize from the chatter. The central figure is a young man named Vadim, who, in the line, meets and courts a college student named Lena. But she's fickle: while taking a lunch break, Lena is lured away from Vadim by an older man—a smooth-talking writer—who persuades her to ditch the line, bragging that he can get her "as many grey-blue ones" as she wants.

After the disappointment of losing Lena, Vadim falls in with a couple of guys who offer to split a bottle of vodka with him. He pops into a nearby grocery store, looking for something to eat with their vodka.

> —Have you got any sausage?
>
> —No, there's none in today.
>
> —Then I'll have two bottles of buttermilk.
>
> —We're out of buttermilk. You can have yoghurt.
>
> —Whatever.

Having secured their places with another person waiting in line, they slip out and get drunk. Vadim passes out on the ground in a courtyard, is awakened by a child politely trying to retrieve a toy truck on which Vadim had collapsed, and rejoins the line hung over. Eventually a rainstorm forces the crowd to run for shelter, and Vadim ends up in the nearest apartment building, where he bumps into a woman, Lyuda, who invites him upstairs for dry clothes and food. She fries potatoes and sausage, he compliments her on her haircut, they discuss the work of Yevtushenko and Voznesensky, and soon nearly the only sounds to be heard are monosyllabic sexual exclamations—about ten pages of them.

All this proceeds without a word of exposition. We know it's raining, for example, because the queuers curse the downpour. Someone suggests to Vadim (we surmise it's Vadim; his interlocutor simply calls him "young man") that he wring out his rain-soaked shirt on the second floor of a nearby apartment building. We follow him as he complains about the dark stairwell, and we know he's bumped into Lyuda when she exclaims and he apologizes. Of course it's not always clear in the novel who's doing the talking—sometimes there's an impressionistic babble of voices—but neither is it hard to follow the story. Sorokin's ability to move his characters around without narration, or even dialogue attribution, is remarkable. Even more impressive, he never forces the characters to say anything awkward simply for the sake of orienting the reader. The queue might have been a ponderous metaphor—for Soviet life, for human existence—in a different kind of novel. But this novel is all lightness and wit. If Solzhenitsyn's three-volume document of the gulag, based on oral accounts by Soviet citizens, is one pole of unofficial Soviet writing, Sorokin's clever trifle, spun from another kind of Soviet conversation, is the opposite.

Most of the chatter up and down the queue is the kind one hears every day—it's deliberately, sometimes comically ordinary. People complain about the heat, about the carelessness of drivers. A mother tries to keep her small son from chasing a mangy cat. Someone starts doing a crossword puzzle out loud ("Doesn't anyone know a tributary of the Don?"). Some pensioners reminisce about better times under Stalin:

> —Those days, I remember, come the first of April, everything'd be cheaper—reduction in prices, see.
>
> —Nowadays it's the other way round—things get dearer all the time.
>
> —That's it. Yet everyone complains about Stalin.
>
> —That's all they know how to do in this country—complain.
>
> —And yet he won the war, strengthened the country. And everything was cheaper. Meat was cheap. Vodka—three roubles. Even less.

In his fidelity to quotidian street conversation, Sorokin thumbs his nose at Socialist realism: he offers exactly the realism that would never be permitted in official Soviet

writing. *The Queue*'s subject matter and up-to-date slang would be off limits to above-ground Soviet writers, as would his gestures toward *vérité*—the absence of authorial intrusion, the pages-long roll calls, empty pages representing the times when Vadim falls asleep. And then there is the ending, with its openly bourgeois moral orientation: Vadim gets to have sex and even sleep late, for Lyuda has more charms than he initially realizes, including inside information about how to get the goods without returning to the queue the next morning.

Sorokin, who began writing in the 1970s while also working as a book illustrator and artist, was part of a group of Moscow artists and writers known as the Moscow Conceptualists, who practiced what they called Sots-Art. The name is short for Socialist Art (an amalgam of "Socialist realism" and the English term Pop Art, a style that was influential for the artists) and was coined by the artists Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid, its most famous practitioners, whose work included parodies of Socialist realism such as portraits of themselves posed and attired as Soviet heroes (a portrait of the two artists as Lenin and Stalin was part of an unofficial open-air Moscow exhibition that was bulldozed by the government). Much of Sorokin's writing before the fall of the Soviet Union likewise parodies the official style, as well as other literary modes and idioms, for he has an extraordinary ear and great wit when it comes to mimicry. One might think of Sorokin, metaphorically, as a star pupil like Komar and Melamid, who mastered the Socialist realist style taught at the Moscow Art School only to expose its fraudulence. But the practitioners of Sots-Art, unlike other generations of dissidents, were not in open, earnest confrontation with the Soviet regime; they played the fool, winking at their audience and daring the king to behead them.

The cheerful simplicity of *The Queue* might surprise readers familiar only with Sorokin's later writings. Sorokin is best known in the West for being the first writer to have obscenity charges filed against him in post-Soviet Russia, over sex scenes between Stalin and Khrushchev (technically, between their clones) in his 1999 novel, *Blue Lard*. After public protests organized by the pro-Putin youth group Moving Together, prosecutors brought, but then quietly dropped, the charges. Moving Together's moral outrage never caught fire with the Russian public, and the most notable consequence of the controversy for Sorokin was

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brisk sales of *Blue Lard*. Among literary-minded Russians there were complicated speculations that the government was behind the protests and that their real target was not Sorokin at all but his publisher, Ad Marginem, which also published other, more politically inflammatory Russian writers.

Sorokin, in any case, was an easy target. Most of his work, pre- and post-glasnost, contains graphic, unexpected violence, outré sex or flamboyant scatology. His second novel, *Norma* (which means the norm or the quota), written in the early 1980s and first published in 1994, contains a long series of vignettes from ordinary Moscow life, a sort of roll call of Soviet society taken with the same sensitivity to ordinary dialogue that distinguishes *The Queue*. At some point in every vignette, at least one of the characters unwraps and eats a brown substance that they call the norm. This substance, the reader eventually realizes, is human shit, which every citizen seems mandated to eat once a day. Though the characters complain a bit about the smell and taste, they don't rebel against the ritual: the preposterous situation has been normalized, another humiliation people have learned to tolerate. It's a more barbed critique of Soviet life than anything in *The Queue*, with Sorokin's deadpan realism making the outrageous premise all the more startling. But his mischief runs in more directions than just Soviet critique: Sorokin is just as happy to offend the intelligentsia with parodies of great Russian writers or to thwart pretty much anyone who expects pleasure and enlightenment from their reading. A later section of *Norma*, about a dacha caretaker writing to his brother-in-law in the city, breaks down into nonsense phrases, then strings of letters, then seven pages' worth of the letter "a," set into paragraphs: the rhythms of the narrative go on without any meaning or sense.

Time in the queue stands still. The rituals of Soviet life seem to be eternal.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Sorokin took to plundering the conventions of popular genres like science fiction and detective novels, of which post-Soviet Russians are prolific writers and readers. *Ice*, his only other novel thus far to be translated into English (by Jamey Gambrell), is the first of a sort of science-fiction trilogy, set in Russia, about a utopian cult whose members consider themselves to be a superior race. They identify new members by cracking open their chest walls with a special kind of interstellar ice and waiting to see if their hearts start "speaking"—that is, communicating in a mysterious, wordless, ecstatic way with the hearts of other cult members. People whose hearts simply stop beating in response to the ice attack are mere ordinary humans ("MACHINES MADE OF MEAT"), whose bodies the cult members leave to rot. The cult's bizarre activities unfold against a Russia filled with organized and petty crime, prostitution, ill-gotten wealth and mundane poverty, which Sorokin describes in the clipped, unadorned style of a detective thriller.

One section at the novel's end is composed entirely of consumer instructions and product testimonials about the ICE Health Improvement System—the interstellar ice has apparently gone from being a mystical object to a kind of virtual-reality self-help product (composed of a video helmet, a breast plate with a "mechanical striking arm," minifreezer and computer) that produces feelings of ecstasy and peace. Or perhaps, more to the point, the cult has found that it doesn't have to resort to brutality to find and recruit members; it only needs to offer free trials of the ICE system. In fact, according to several testimonials, the ICE system has become such a popular form of recreation that it is putting the film industry out of business. As usual, Sorokin's tone is slippery; he does not cue the reader to a particular reaction. The testimonials are offered by a cross section of former Soviet citizens—a film director, a saleswoman, a retired World War II veteran from the Caucasus—who describe, in their different voices, upon using the product, an initial sense of aching sadness that summons childhood memories of their first experiences with death, then a euphoric flow of emotion and a vision of holding hands in a giant circle of 23,000 other people experiencing blissful intercoronary communication. The stories they tell are punctuated by clichés of (mild) childhood trauma, personal fulfillment and creative visualization and somehow manage to be obscurely moving and ridiculous. The film director describes "such a warm, sharp feeling in my heart, the sort you have only in childhood when you experience everything directly.… Tears poured from my eyes. The tear aspirator in the helmet began to work immediately. It was such a pleasant feeling; the tears were sucked up so tenderly. I was trembling all over from this attack of universal compassion."

Sorokin is speaking our language here. The idea of people with a desire for communal connection that they can only express in the clichéd phrases of self-help, New Age spirituality and advertising (rather than, for instance, Communist slogans), and can only find, ironically, through private forms of entertainment and pleasure-seeking, has been taken up with anguish by American postmodern writers for several decades. As it has in previous centuries, Russian culture seems to have zoomed through decades' worth of Western developments in a few years, to arrive at a fully formed state of late-capitalist anomie.

It is hard today not to read the *The Queue* retrospectively. How innocent seems the shoppers' earnest consideration of the fine points of fur collars and leather workmanship. For all their intense focus on products, it has possibly not yet occurred to them that what they buy might change who they are or give them a deeper connection with their fellow men. (They are, after all, still deprived of commercial advertising.) The novel's Moscow is a far less menacing place than the Moscow of Sorokin's recent work, and the lighter mood of the novel casts, for the contemporary reader, a nostalgic glow over the late Soviet period. Not that the times were so good, but they were better than they had been, and if you were idealistically inclined you could still hope that there might be something still better and nobler outside the Soviet system. If, at the time Sorokin wrote the novel, it was a sly joke about the absurdities of Soviet life, it has with time and geopolitical upheavals come to strike more profound notes of futility. We now know that the dissolution of the Soviet Empire and the planned economy will not save most of the queueing Muscovites from consumer indignities but will simply replace the old indignities with new ones. Nor, for that matter, will the end of the empire free them from various kinds of oppression by the state, or even, in many cases, from simple poverty.

But the people in the queue don't know that yet. Time stands still in the queue; the rituals of Soviet life seem to be eternal. The frustration of waiting in line is solaced by the anticipation of whatever it is you're expecting to get—not to mention the gruff camaraderie of these particular queuers. It seems suddenly not so bad to wait and contemplate the acquisition of a shearling coat with an astrakhan collar, to nurse a desire not yet dashed, or complicated, by fulfillment. ■

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BACK TALK

ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

Michelle Goldberg

Michelle Goldberg is a freelance journalist whose newest book, *The Means of Reproduction: Sex, Power, and the Future of the World* (Penguin Press, $25.95), explores the past fifty years of global reproductive issues. —*Christine Smallwood*

What is the story you're telling in this book?

The broad sweep of the story starts in the 1950s and 1960s, when there was a cold war panic about overpopulation. There were these almost Strangelove-ian military planners freaking out that overpopulation would make Third World countries so immiserated that they would go communist. You know, George H.W. Bush used to be known as Rubbers because he was so obsessed with contraception. And then there was almost a complete switch. Part of the story is about the rise of the religious right and the rise of the feminist movement. Politicians couldn't concede that much [to the right] in the United States because of *Roe v. Wade*, but they could do its bidding on the global stage. I also try to show how this dynamic is now rebounding all over the world. Some of the same players and same ideas and organizations intersect in totally different ways in Nicaragua, India or Kenya.

Why are the interests of women marginalized in such debates?

People will support women's reproductive rights when there's another end goal. People were very supportive of family planning when it was about national security. One of the sad ironies is that you had these amazing women who took over and did redirect these institutions to focus on choice and reproductive rights, but that's when the world lost interest. Women's rights are the answer to so many global problems. But people will try everything else first.

America has been influential in controlling access to such rights.

The United States really initiated all these programs. One story I think is fascinating is about how the United States contracted with this rogue illegal abortionist in California to manufacture a kind of safe, handheld manual abortion device that we then shipped round the world by tens of thousands. The United States also was the guiding force behind the creation of the United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], which is ironic because we've been trying to destroy UNFPA for the past eight years. Even during the last Bush administration we were still the largest distributor of contraceptives in the world; it was just that there were certain countries that weren't getting them at all because the agencies that were barred from distributing them under the global gag rule were the only ones that were working in these countries, like Yemen.

Will women in the developed world have more children if they have more support from the state?

I started the book thinking that the freakout over the birth dearth in Europe was overblown. But there's a real problem. These kinds of birthrates are not sustainable. Or they're not sustainable if you want to maintain European social democracy and pensions. If Italy's birthrate remains the same, in 100 years it will have 14 percent of the population it has now. You can supplement a lot of that with immigration—and I'm really pro-immigration—but once you get such high levels of immigration, you're just begging for nationalist backlashes, and…it's just not sustainable. You can raise the birthrate by introducing a regime of reproductive totalitarianism, or you can introduce a regime of comprehensive daycare, parental leave and such. Once societies attain a certain level of development, women are going to demand to work. In societies that make that support impossible, women are not having children. There's an absolute direct correlation between how supportive a society is of working mothers and the national birthrate. The United States is a special case for all kinds of odd reasons. This is something that feminists on the left haven't particularly wanted to talk about because it's tricky—Oh no, how come white people aren't having enough children? But actually the facts are on the side of people who are advocating for a bigger welfare state and more sexually equitable societies.

What of the tensions between feminism and multiculturalism?

I see feminism as being really bound up and inextricable from modernity. It is a threat to traditional cultures. And I don't think that Western women can go into such a culture and say, Sorry, you can't live like this anymore. But there are women already trying to do that work, and they're isolated and they need help. An example would be Agnes Pareyio, who is a Masai woman fighting female genital mutilation in Kenya, which is very controversial. She had undergone circumcision even though she hadn't wanted to, and as she got older she came to really regret it and started agitating against the practice, going by foot to different villages in her own community, and soon girls started running away. The idea of being in a really remote village in Kenya, and hearing a rumor that this person exists out there, and packing up your little knapsack and sneaking away in the middle of the night and going through the bush—it just blew me away. It was like this virus. They started going by the hundreds. No outsider can go in there and say, Run away from your family! But Agnes was helped by the fact that Western governments pressured Kenya to make female genital mutilation illegal, which means that these parents can't call the police to have her charged with kidnapping. So she's protected by this global system.

What of sex-selective abortion in a traditional culture?

Sex-selective abortion is a real problem. Feminists in India who are horrified by what's going on, their language is very foreign to the American feminist movement, because it's not about choice; it's about rights. Gita Sen said that sometimes a woman's choice to have a sex-selective abortion reflects the fact that she has very few rights. Because of the importance of dowry, having a girl is a huge financial liability. Traditions make it rational for a woman to want a son. You have certain women who are carrying a female fetus and are coerced into having an abortion, but there are others who go out and get one because it's important to their status; it's important to their role. ■

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Green Acres

by GREG GRANDIN

The Lost City of Z
A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon.
By David Grann.
Doubleday. 339 pp. $27.50.

In early 1925, British Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett, having convinced himself, based on a mix of archival research, deduction and clairvoyance, that a large undiscovered city lay hidden somewhere in the Amazon, entered the jungle to try to find it. The word "quixotic" has its origins in a story set on the Spanish plains, in the same century when Europeans were first entering South America's vast, seemingly unending rainforest. Since then, the adjective has often been applied to those like Fawcett—explorers entranced by the promise of riches or fame, as assured in their quests as the Man of La Mancha was that the windmills he tilted at were giants. "I call it Z," wrote Fawcett of his fabled metropolis, "for the sake of convenience."

Fawcett, his son Jack and another companion were never heard from again, but their disappearance prompted a parade of would-be rescuers. With the US frontier closed, Africa carved up and the British Empire at its widest girth, "the big blank spaces in the map," as a character says in Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, based partly on Fawcett's earlier travels, were "all being filled in, and there's no room for romance anywhere"—except for the opportunity to reprise Stanley's feat and find a lost Victorian. By 1933 so many film crews, reporters and adventurers were converging on the Amazon in the hunt for the Fawcett party that the Brazilian government, to avoid having to save yet another writer looking for material or Hollywood actor hoping for publicity, put an embargo on future trips.

Fawcett is often called the last of the great explorers, and the man who wrote his eulogy was Peter Fleming, brother of the creator of James Bond. In 1932 Fleming answered an ad in the *London Times* for "guns" to join a Fawcett search. An Etonian and recent Christ Church graduate, he had no doubt he would be picked. "An Old Boy," he wrote, "is worth two young men." The party didn't find Fawcett, but Fleming's account of the trip, *Brazilian Adventure*, became a bestseller. In its introduction, he confessed that he tried to "pile on the agony a good deal; I felt it would be expected of me." He had, after all, a "free hand" in describing the "Great Unknown"; his predecessors had "made great play with the Terrors of the Jungle. The alligators, the snakes, the man-eating fish, the lurking savages, those dreadful insects—all the paraphernalia of tropical mumbo jumbo lay ready to my hand." But finding the privations of the Amazon nothing compared with the dangers of London, Fleming opted to write a "strictly truthful" book.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Percy Harrison Fawcett maps the frontier between Brazil and Bolivia in 1908.

Fleming could be accused of dressed-up Anglo supremacy. "You don't hit your butler, do you?" he asked a fellow traveler, rebuking him for striking their Brazilian boat pilot. But the quip disarmed a tense situation by appealing to a culturebound sense of propriety, which Fleming held responsible for the fight in the first place: the pilot had patted the Englishman's back in a show of friendship, but with the pilot being slightly drunk "his gesture…lacked that crisp and manly impetus with which Anglo-Saxons slap each other between the shoulder blades." It was taken for "pawing," a "word abhorrent wherever the English language is spoken." Here then was empire looking back on itself, taking in the high-strung "homoerotic aura" of English public school, as described by historian Peter Gay, with its fastidious pretensions to "discipline, purity, and decorum." Or, as Noël Coward wrote the year before Fleming left for Brazil, "though the British are effete," like mad dogs they are "quite impervious to heat." "Only an alienist," Fleming admitted, "could have chronicled our activities either seriously or scientifically."

And yet over the years, the Amazon still beckons and Fawcett still summons. Brazil's attempt to ban Fawcett-sleuthing failed, and since Fleming, successive missions have tried to establish the facts of the disappearance. The most recent detective is *New Yorker* writer David Grann, who in *The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon* depicts Fawcett as close cousin to Hannah Arendt's "tragic and quixotic fools of imperialism," essential to empire's advance yet standing slightly askew to its edifice. Fawcett hailed from the aristocracy, but his father, born in India and a famous cricket batsman, drank himself into destitution. A military commission in Ceylon allowed Fawcett—then a lieutenant—to keep up gentry appearances, though he viewed the colonial officer corps as a "base" reproduction of Britain's "white ruling caste," instilling in him a "somewhat Dickensian horror."

Need of money first sent Fawcett into the wilds of Ceylon searching for treasure, but, as Grann writes, exploration was an extension into nature of the Victorians' "never ending war" against the world's physical and moral corruptions. Fawcett was a supreme soldier of this war; Grann, whose own hunt for Fawcett traces a path through the archives and into the Amazon

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Greg Grandin is a professor of history at New York University. His new book, Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City *(Metropolitan), will be published in June.*

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forest, links the colonel's legendary stamina in the jungle to the discipline involved in repressing sexual urges. Fawcett survived public-school canings, military academy tortures and the Battle of the Somme, which he called Armageddon, forging himself into a "Nietzschean explorer." Grann also makes a case that rebellion against such strictures, equally Victorian, blossomed into a radical cultural and metaphysical relativism. Fawcett increasingly questioned Anglo-Saxon man's place at the apex of evolution. Cannibalism, he wrote after the Somme battle, "at least provides a reasonable motive for killing a man, which is more than you can say for civilized warfare." The explorer became obsessed with the occult, certain of the existence of a more pristine plane of being, which for a while in Ceylon he thought he had found in Buddhism. "I transgressed again and again," Fawcett confessed, "the awful laws of traditional behavior."

Sent by London's Royal Geographical Society in 1906 to help Bolivia and Brazil map their Amazonian border, Fawcett became addicted to the jungle. Grann writes that Fawcett "conducted one expedition after another in which he explored thousands of square miles of the Amazon and helped to redraw the map of South America." It was during these treks that the explorer came to believe in Z, which he placed somewhere in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso. After the Great War, the idea took hold of Fawcett with pounding delirium. He thought Z to be the "cradle of all civilization," perhaps even the lost city of Atlantis, finding confirmation of its existence in séances and mediums. Like Arendt's fool, who after tours on empire's front line couldn't recover his "English self," Fawcett grew agitated while in London. The city, he said, was as a "prison gate slowly but surely shutting me in." At the same time, long periods abroad fortified a crystalline Victorianism, austere and unerring. And though Grann doesn't speculate on this point, perhaps it was the allure of such purity that explains why so many—one chronicle puts the number at over a hundred—followed lemminglike to their deaths this last true Englishman.

The One Oval Window

The surface
of this street is sweet
enough to lick.
There is usually
a fee for sacrifice,
ladies, and mine
is a store for rent.
Terrace danger
cannot be traded
for river danger
or danger danger.

In this light,
the clouds.

JENNIFER KRONOVET

Roughly 4,000 miles long and home to more than 10 percent of the world's species of flora and fauna, the Amazon contains the largest river system in the world, holding about 15 percent of the earth's river water, expelling 57 million gallons per second. The main trunk and tributaries have been modified over the centuries with canals, footpaths and, increasingly, roads transforming nature's baroque into human rococo, weaving an already bedazzling ecology of waterways and flood plains into an even more intricate set of nested trading systems, connecting nine of South America's thirteen countries and, via Venezuela's Orinoco River, numerous Caribbean nations. Yet compared with the industrial Mississippi, the Amazon, despite its grandeur, remains today largely an artisanal river. Its pilots rely on a lifetime of experience to navigate shifting sandbars, fast-changing depths and a powerful tidal bore that rushes ten miles upriver with a roar described by an early twentieth-century traveler as a "regiment of light artillery on the stampede," leaving the largest of ships aground in its wake. And unlike the delta of the Mississippi, which over the past two centuries has been reduced from a patchwork of barely navigable bayous, islands, sandbars and estuaries to a rationalized sluice, the Amazon's terminus remains variegated, with many metamorphosing routes in and out.

Size is one of Amazonia's wonders; it's common to point out that its total landmass is just smaller than the continental United States. But a more useful way to explain its thrall is to think of it as the United States' existential opposite. More than half a century ago Octavio Paz wrote that while all of the New World represented a rejuvenating historical force, the razor's edge of Anglo-Saxon utopianism was honed in North America's unique geography: "pure space, open to human action," which freed men from fighting "against history"—against the class divisions, feudal hierarchies and encrusted traditions that stifled Europe. They instead concentrated their struggle "against nature," formidable though ultimately pliable. Peoples and machines turned forests into farms, deserts into gardens, making the world young again. Native societies that stood in their way were cast out of history, rendered into the "evil that is outside, part of the natural world," like rivers, mountains and other obstacles that must be "domesticated or destroyed." Since "the American reality is the reinvention of itself," Paz continued, then "whatever is found in anyway irreducible or unassimilable is not American."

In contrast, the Amazon—pure space in its own way—has been America's irreducible extreme, a sinkhole enveloping desire and, from El Dorado to Z, laying waste to ambition. "There is nothing on that river but despair," wrote the sixteenth-century Basque rogue conquistador Lope de Aguirre. None other than George Frost Kennan, in a lesser known "long memo" that made the case for extending his anticommunist containment policy to Latin America, compared the dynamism of the US landscape, which allows for an "organic intimacy" with nature, with Latin America's "unhappy and hopeless" habitat. "In North America," Kennan wrote, "the Mississippi drains and serves the great basin of fertility which is the heart of the continent. The Amazon, on the other hand, reaches great fingers into a region singularly hostile to human activity." Where the United States was progress in motion, the revelation of God's will—or History's design—in the world, the Amazon's "overpowering sensation of the absolute," as the Portuguese writer José Maria Ferreira de Castro remarked, was stillness incarnate. The Brazilian jungle is the "last unwritten page of Genesis," Euclides da Cunha wrote.

Many proposals have been floated over the years to develop the Amazon and assimilate it into the United States' domain. Theodore Roosevelt, at the start of an expedition he took in 1914, imagined it reduced to yeoman pastures, its rivers providing "unlimited motive force to populous manufacturing communities," which would evolve into an "industrial civilization," in effect extending the United States' westward wave. Others thought Manifest Destiny flowed south, believing the Amazon to be an extension of the Mississippi. In the 1840s a Richmond newspaper argued that since Atlantic currents carried the Amazon's waters north into the Gulf of Mexico, the river "may very properly be regarded as one of the tributar-

ies" to "this our noble sea," the Caribbean. A few years later, the Virginian Matthew Fontaine Maury, head of the Naval Observatory, thought the United States could avoid a civil war and keep its expanding cotton industry by purchasing the Amazon as it had Louisiana and using it to relocate planters and slaves. "How men from the Mississippi could make things hum along the Amazon," waxed another Southerner.

Is there some sort of cosmic protocol requiring that the enormity of the Amazon be accorded the due respect of outlandish schemes? During World War II, Nelson Rockefeller, as head of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, suggested turning the Amazon into a network of massive canals stretching from the Caribbean to Argentina and giving the United States, via the Mississippi, direct access to South America's interior markets and resources. In the 1960s neocon futurist Herman Kahn (one of the prototypes for Dr. Strangelove) proposed damming the river to create five enormous "Great Lakes," turning the area into the equivalent of South America's own industrial Midwest. Yet as each plan to tap the jungle's resources fizzled, Amazonia came to be seen as a temptress, seducing man to impose his will, only to reveal it as impotent. The jungle even broke Theodore Roosevelt. By the end of his trip, with disease eating at his flesh and despair pushing him to the point of suicide, he was reduced to chanting the opening lines of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan": "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan/ A stately pleasure-dome decree."

In metaphorical terms, though, the Amazon was more yielding than most places. It could be whatever you wanted it to be: a green hell, an Eden, a pleasure garden. Roosevelt thought it to be largely devoid of people, "entirely indifferent to good or evil," working "out her ends or no ends with utter disregard of pain and woe." For those readers not familiar with the theology that hell is the absence of God, the Rough Rider left little doubt as to the analogy he was drawing: he began an account of his journey with a detailed seventeen-page description of treacherous serpents. Yet at the same time, utopia always seemed to be waiting around the next bend in the river. In 1927 the *New York Times* reported a rumor that Fawcett had been found alive and well, living in a "veritable paradise," a bountiful land "that has no owner." The wayward Victorian had become entranced by the "sorcerous jungle and wished to know nothing more from the civilized world." Another newspaper endorsed Fawcett's reported "misanthropy" as an antidote to Jazz Age precocity and recommended sending, instead of explorers and scientists, poets and musicians to entice him back.

Fawcett's enduring appeal is that he vanished just as mass society was turning enchantment into kitsch. In their dispatches home, those who went looking for the British explorer continued to emphasize the jungle's treacheries, working the Amazon more firmly into English-speaking popular culture. Yet with more and more people living in cities, pastoral waltzes and wanderlust ballads like "River of Dreams" and "On the Dreamy Amazon" figured the valley as melancholy, not unlike contemporary odes to the Mississippi, achieving, in a way, the yearned-for confluence of the two rivers.

In considering a story like Fawcett's, one appreciates Peter Fleming's restraint. It would be easy when telling the tale to portray the Amazon more as a metaphysical testing ground than a social or ecological system, where moral emptiness mirrors human alienation. Compared with the "vileness and baseness and obscenity of all this jungle," said Werner Herzog, who made two films about jungle obsessives, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Fitzcarraldo*, "we only sound and look like badly pronounced and half-finished sentences out of a stupid suburban novel, a cheap novel." (*Fitzcarraldo* is based on the life of the rubber baron Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald López, who, unlike Herzog, had the good sense to dismantle his riverboat before trying to haul it over a mountain.) "It's still prehistorical," Herzog thought. "The only thing that is lacking is—is the dinosaurs."

But for all its ability to photosynthesize the fantasies and fears of outsiders, the Amazon is a real place. Throughout the nineteenth century, as practically the sole source of the world's latex, integral to the advance of industrial capitalism, the forest was no more unmoored from time than Manchester or Detroit. Along the great rubber corridor running south of the Amazon River from the Atlantic into the lower reaches of the tropical Andes, the latex boom pressed indigenous communities into what Amazon scholar Susanna Hecht calls "terror slavery," which included the torture, rape and starvation inflicted by the British-financed Peruvian Amazon Company, documented by Roger Casement in 1910. As native Amazonians died, they were replaced by migrants from Brazil's drought-prone northeast, who arrived by the boatload, already withered

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and bonded to pay for the voyage. And the slavery continues: more than 20,000 workers are captured every year in the Amazon, forced to work in wretched conditions, clearing forest for soy and sugar plantations or tending furnaces to make contraband pig iron, forming the first ring in a labor chain linked to the most respectable corporations. Steel made from Amazonian pig iron forged by slaves has been used in Ford and General Motors cars and Whirlpool appliances. Slave-mined gold forms the capital reserves of some of the world's largest banks. Rather than being a holdover from a lost world, modern slavery is, as an official from Brazil's Ministry of Labor puts it, a "key part of the globalized, export-oriented economy Brazil thrives upon."

Grann's rehabilitation of Fawcett rests on a rich paradox: Grann avoids reducing the Amazon to a canvas of Western fantasies about itself by defending Fawcett's original vision of the jungle. Fawcett's case for the existence of Z grew out of his appreciation of the expertise native Amazonians demonstrated in extracting medicine and food from their harsh environment, reinforced by hearing legends of a lost great civilization and reading early Spanish accounts of jungle "cities that glistened in white," connected by "many roads" and "fine highways," populated by skilled potters and other craftsmen. The "ethnology of the continent," Fawcett said, was "built up on a misconception"—the fallacy being that the jungle's severe ecology limited the possibility of large, sophisticated civilizations. In the years after Fawcett's disappearance, environmental determinism became orthodoxy. Published in 1971, Betty J. Meggers's *Amazonia: Man and Culture in a Counterfeit Paradise*, based on decades of fieldwork, drove home the idea that the forest's extreme biodiversity was deceptive, that what appeared to be rich, dark soil was veneer, beneath which was mostly acidic sand. But recently a new generation of scholars, led by University of Illinois archaeologist Anna Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt's great-granddaughter, has contested this view. Roosevelt, also drawing on extensive fieldwork, argues that Amazonia supported "very populous societies comparable to complex chiefdoms and small states known in other parts of the world," whose farming technologies would allow them to transcend the limits of anemic soil.

Now in her 80s and only recently retired as director of the Smithsonian's Latin American Archaeology Program, Meggers dismisses those who argue that early Amazonians had built large cities, perhaps home to as many as a half-million people and rivaling those of the Aztecs and Mayans. "The myth of El Dorado," she says, "just keeps going on and on and on. It's amazing." Meggers's scholarship helped spur early campaigns to save the Amazon, and today she says the idea that the forest's weak soil could support large populations has allowed developers to "operate without restraint," accelerating the "pace of environmental degradation." Revisionists insist that the civilizations they are describing were sustainable. Agriculture was oriented not toward profit-driven export but subsistence, and the sophisticated techniques of soil enrichment they have identified, including the charring of pottery and organic matter, could provide a model for the continual reuse of planting fields, limiting pressure to cut down more and more trees. "It's not like loggers are revving up the chain saws after reading our articles," says Brazilian archaeologist Eduardo Góes Neves.

Grann ends his quest with a Fawcett-worthy test of endurance that leaves him siding with the revisionists. Having become separated from his guide, Grann loses his trail and sinks into mud. With reeds ripping his skin and desperation closing in, he is finally rescued by a group of naked children who lead him to his destination: the field site of archaeologist Michael Heckenberger, close to where Fawcett had imagined Z. There Grann is shown evidence of causeways, bridges, settlements, palisades, plazas and roads, "laid out," says Heckenberger, with a "sense of engineering and mathematics that rivaled anything that was happening in much of Europe at the time." "Poor Fawcett," Grann quotes his guide as saying, "he was so close."

Until recently, stories told about the Amazon tended to emphasize its unconquerable enormity, which has repelled one challenger after another. That's changed, of course, since the forest now appears to be fragile. Much of what was jungle during Fawcett's last trek through Mato Grosso is now covered with soybeans, which, along with cattle and logging, are the primary agents of deforestation. The beans are grown for export to the United States, Europe and China and crossbred to survive ever more humid climes, which means there is no limit to how far planters can push into the Amazon. Since the 1970s, 20 percent of the forest has disappeared, and if the current pace continues, another 40 percent of what's left will be gone by 2050. Slowing this deforestation will be Amazonia's final test. ■

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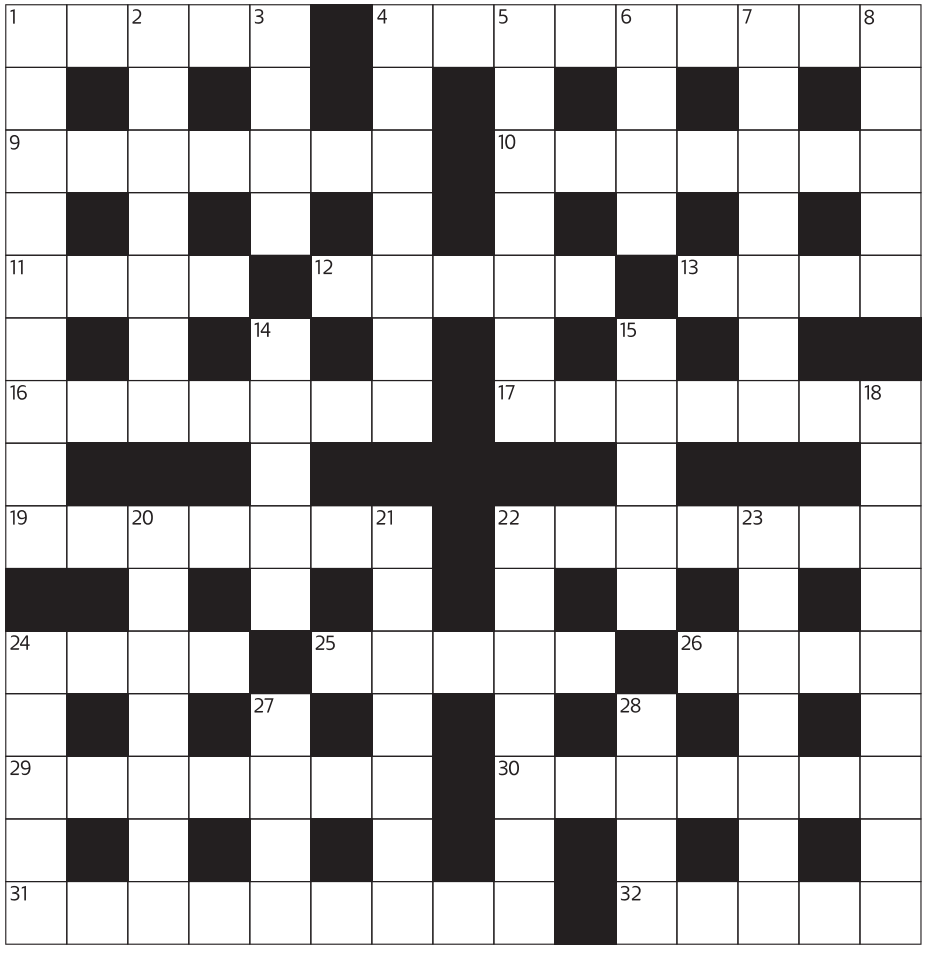

ACROSS

1 and **4** It has to have sunlight to accomplish anything. (Picture a complex combination!) (14)

9 Everything passes on around it, and fools around without purpose. (7)

10 Any kind of security device would suffice for a hip type to close his personal domain, as he calls it. (7)

11 and **12** Hurry, hurry! (The last part is said to create leftover material.) (4,5)

13 Real cards, as they say, make it in different directions. (4)

16 A wrought-up feeling is back, with 10 on the surroundings. (7)

17 Some question about the ability of the movie dog to discover game. (7)

19 Run your fingers along the religious symbol—it was crossed historically. (7)

22 Call for the worker, and show the result! (7)

24 ¡Caramba! I love showing the money to get out of a tight spot! (4)

25 It's a trap! (But you can beat it!) (5)

26 It's a stylish way for a big city to begin! (4)

29 Forming an exact divisor, "The Great One"—quote—without a point to show for it. (7)

30 One of the Windward Islands has a green beginning, but finally it's nothing to Juan! (7)

31 Baby might lose its cover without one! (6,3)

32 High fliers as part of a skit especially made for them. (5)

DOWN

1 It measures how you proceed like a saint around the top of the cathedral, perhaps. (9)

2 Possibly pictures have a relation with what one might want in stormy weather. (7)

3 Nothing with Hans's version to leave out! (4)

4 A bad mark about our country to endure without giving way. (7)

5 Having to do with Uncle showing favoritism, you get to sort of notice quiet in it. (7)

6, **15** and **28** Game for the youngster, who traditionally counts blindly. (4,3,2,4)

7 A building might have many tales to show for it. (7)

8 It sounds like one looks for them in Punjab. (5)

14 and **27** Said to be a nasty way to turn up any possible miscreant. (Salem had more than one!) (5,4)

15 See 6

18 One of these might be found at the literary breakfast table. (A modern vehicle and broken-down carts provide it.) (9)

20 One very loud following for 24 across, possibly as a court attendant. (7)

21 The sort of flight Lindbergh made. (7)

22 Daddy has just a piece of cloth on but serves as a real model! (7)

23 A crumpled hat covering a slight blemish from side to side. (7)

24 Carries animals this way? (5)

27 See 14

28 See 6

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3163

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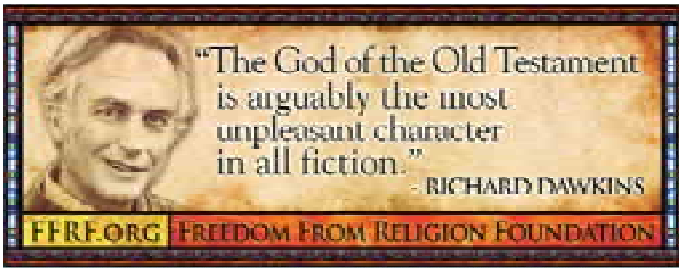
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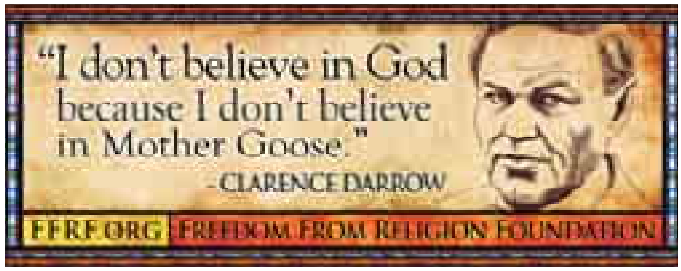

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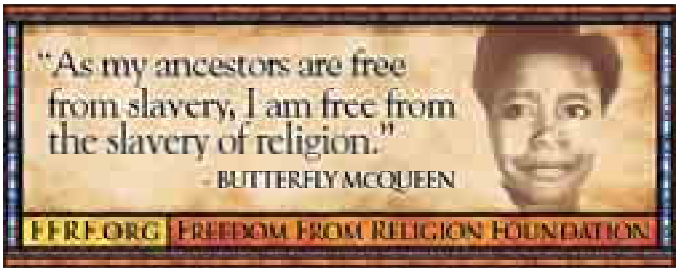
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- BUTTERFLY MCQUEEN
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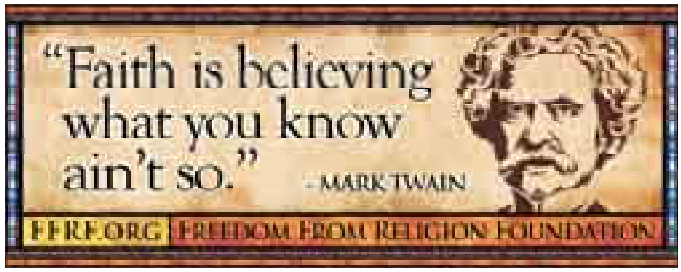
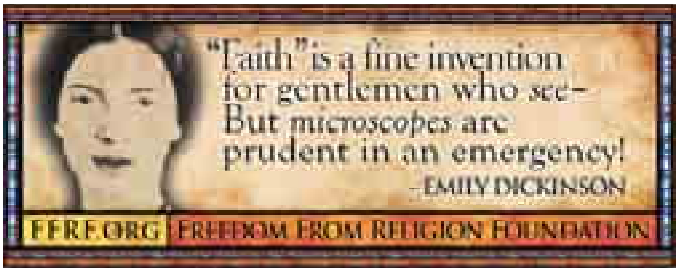


Definitely not a sign from above.


"Faith" is a fine invention for gentlemen who see– But microscopes are prudent in an emergency!
- EMILY DICKINSON
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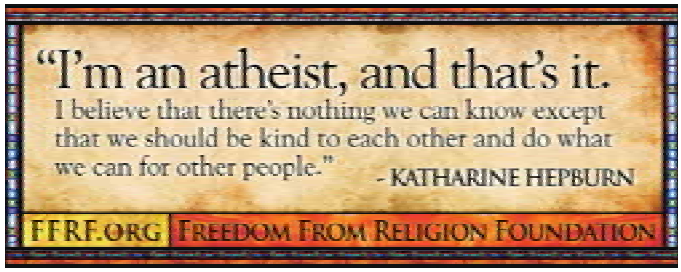
"I'm an atheist, and that's it.
I believe that there's nothing we can know except that we should be kind to each other and do what we can for other people."
- KATHARINE HEPBURN
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